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— May. S. Blanchard

Lowell

June '73

— Majr.









COMEDIES.

BY

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THE WILL AND THE WAY

A COMEDY

IN FIVE ACTS

THE WILL AND THE WAY,

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

FERDINAND, *King of Syracuse.*

PRINCE TANCRED, *his Son.*

COUNT ROGER, *Friend of TANCRED.*

ORONTIO, *Prime Minister to the King.*

BERNARDO, *a Priest, Confessor to the King.*

COUNT MANFRED, *of Palermo.*

ALPHONSO, }  
OSMOND, } *Gentlemen of Syracuse.*

CONRADO, *Steward of the Palace.*

PRINCESS MATILDA, *Niece to the King.*

ROSALIE, *Daughter of ORONTIO.*

BLANCHE, *Niece of ORONTIO.*

BARBARA, *maid to ROSALIE.*

Chamberlain, Messenger, Captain, Herald, Attendants.

*Time—In the Fifteenth Century.*

*Scene—SYRACUSE, except the first Scene of the first Act,  
which is near NAPLES.*

# THE WILL AND THE WAY.

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## ACT I.

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### SCENE I.

*A Grove near Naples.*

TANCRED *and* ROGER.

TANCRED. By Heaven ! but I could almost hate my rank,  
That it went nigh to rob me of myself.  
Roger, but thou — thou art not sociable ;  
Or else thou 'dst kept me amorous company,  
And toward her cousin vented as sweet sighs  
As I toward Rosalie. Could I but think  
Thou wast in love : then wert thou perfect, whole.  
Knowst thou where joy and sorrow are akin ?

ROGER. I know that love is crafty at invention.

TANC. I'll tell thee. Parents are they both of wisdom.

ROGER. Like Hercules' labor 'mong th' Hesperides,  
Thy brain hath wrought a logic miracle,  
Plucking such ponderous fruit from sapless soil.





ROG. Or frowns.

TANC. If Rosalie did ever frown.

ROG. Upon my word, I never saw her frown.

TANC. And did she so, why frowns would sit on her  
Like clouds at molten eve, sunned into grace,  
Made beautiful by what they bask in.

ROG. Thou,  
Meanwhile, as faithful glass—forget not that—  
As smile for smile, wilt give back frown for frown ;  
Whence the black danger, that those doubling frowns,  
Breeding as cloud doth cloud in angry weather,  
Heaven's face besmirch with gusty grimness,  
Not to be rent but by a stormful breach ;  
And then, obsequious glass, instead of smiles,  
Hot lightning and the rough-mouthed thunder echoes.  
Alas ! too certain 'tis, as smile to smile,  
And frown to frown, love leads to matrimony.

TANC. Now I suspect thee. Thou dost never flout  
At aught thyself hast not a part in. Come,  
Confess.

ROG. Well, in what guise? Shall I protest  
A melancholy sickness at my heart,—

TANC. All sicknesses that life is wasted with  
Are purged from hearts that are by love invigored.  
Does it not seem as thou wert disembodied ;  
Snatched up from earthly moods and cares and thrallments ;  
In thoughts above this muddy sphere ensteeped ;  
Consorted with celestial essences —

ROG. Hold—I'll confess: only leave me on earth.  
 For 'tis the very front of my confession,  
 That her dear face looked never yet so fair.  
 I'm all terrestrial, and this clod, my body,  
 Paces its native dust with prouder port,  
 Since I have here discerned in what sweet forms  
 Our elemental grossness can be wrought;  
 For Blanche's eyes are only fulgent clay.

TANC. How thou art curséd with imagination,  
 That canst espy such vile affinities.

ROG. Diamond and gold are dust, and all the feasts  
 The senses in their finest hunger take  
 Are but more cunning mixtures of mere mud.

TANC. Well, rail thy worst, and beat thy bars; thou'rt  
 caged.

ROG. To friendship and to loyalty a martyr.  
 My Prince, my friend, a pining prisoner,  
 And I not share in his captivity!  
 But see, where yonder come our gentle captors.

TANC. Enlinked in one another's shining arms,  
 In fragrant interchange of maiden love.

ROG. Like woodbine and white jesmin interlocked,  
 Perfuming each the other with their breaths.

TANC. The branches stoop to kiss their radiant brows.

ROG. The birds have hushed to hear their cadenced voices.

*Enter ROSALIE and BLANCHE. They start on seeing*

*TANCRED and ROGER, and disengage their arms.*

TANC. Forgive us that we fright your solitude.

ROSALIE. In truth we did not think to meet you here.  
Yet is the meeting apt, for we must hence ;  
And first would thank you for your courtesies.

TANC. What you are fain to call our courtesies,  
Are only echoes, shadows of yourselves ;  
Doings, the which, although by us enacted,  
Are yet as indivisible from your presence  
As is illumination from the sun.  
You gender courtesý, as you do life  
On the pleased mirror that retorts your image.

ROS. Your words, sir, are what words not always are,  
Near kinsmen of your acts, and these embrace  
With sumptuous phrase, that still enriches them  
As caskets deep-enchased do costly gems.

BLANCHE. And thus-enclasped, more glibly shall we bear  
                  them  
Away to Syracuse.

ROG.                               To Syracuse !

TANC. To Syracuse !

ROS.                               We must take ship to day ;  
And with good Neptune's favor shall o'erride  
His wind-ploughed field ere a new morrow dies.

ROG. Wherefore to Syracuse ?

ROS.                               It is our nest,  
Whence we with half-fledged wings have lately flown.

TANC. Rumor belies it, or 'tis a city worth  
A voyage to behold ; wise and well governed.

ROG. If so, a solitary paragon

It is 'mong cities.

ROS. Better can we tell  
Of convent-rule, wherein we have been bounded.  
Yet, so far may our girlish knowledge stretch,  
As to report the general heart, whose pulse  
Beats everywhere content, unsoiled by fear,  
Save for the future.

TANC. Ah! whence comes this fear?

ROS. The King is agéd, and surmises cloud  
The hopes of thinking subjects, when they weigh  
What changes may assault us at his death.

TANC. Behind the duteous masking of your thought  
I spy the tell-tale glance of meaning, thus;—  
The good King's heir is somewhat better known  
Unto the fears of men than to their hopes.

ROG. A fickle Prince, constant in self-devotion?

BLANCHE. Nay, sir, your guess hits wide of the crown's  
heir.

ROG. Ay; self-love in a Prince is pardoned quickest.  
It is a fault the prostrate subjects love.

ROS. Howe'er that be, it is no fault of his.  
Rather is he taxed with self-forgetfulness,  
Not valuing the homage of his place,  
Its princely dignities and royal dues;  
But given to still and learned occupations;  
Whereto he is enlisted by his friend  
And loved companion, Roger, Count of Susa,  
Deep-versed in hidden things.





And oft remove themselves for many moons  
 Seeking close converse with outlandish seers  
 And delvers in forbidden mines of knowledge—  
 A cause of dutiful disquietude  
 Unto the King and Court. But come, dear cousin,  
 'Tis time that we commit us to the waves.  
 Our ready ship, chafing her cable curb,  
 Springs at the frothy sea, eager to chase  
 This sunny breeze that runs so fast toward Sicily.

TANC. Would that we could transmute ourselves to wind,  
 That we might fan you home with gentlest force,  
 Spending our life in breath upon your sails  
 When friendly breezes falter.

Ros. To minister  
 Unseen, felt but not known; that were to scale  
 Unearthly heights of bounteousness. The thought  
 Enfolds its thinker: this your courteous wish  
 Embalms you in our memory. Farewell!

TANC. That voice so tuneful should speak word so harsh.  
 Till now I never learned its envious meaning.

Ros. To learn is ever the best end of travel.

ROG. And to their teachers learners should be grateful.  
 Wherefore, for this, your bitter-sweet instruction,  
 We thank you. Could we but repay the lesson,—

Ros. We, sir, are neither travellers nor scholars.

ROG. Learners you are, for you are young and witty;  
 And the best lesson is not always learnt  
 Through watchful purpose, but by sudden light



ROG. Dancing on briny waves what shall I be,  
When from the billowy motion of your tongue  
I am already sea-sick?

TANC.                               Ha! ha! ha!  
I had forgot your qualmish malady.  
Oh! Sicily, my country, till this hour  
I knew not how I love thee.

ROG.                                       Whither wilt thou?

TANC. Whither? Whither but back to Syracuse?

ROG. The King's son wafted to his capital  
Intorted in the wings of upstart Cupids.

TANC. A seat for gods to envy.

ROG.                                       And for men  
To weep at.

TANC.       Ay, with tears of crocodile.  
Roger, why should the Prince englut the man?

ROG. Princehood and manhood are blank opposites.  
He who begins by swallowing his fellows,  
Must end with the engulfing of himself.

TANC. I will have no such ending or beginning.  
We'll think of this, and you shall do the thinking.

ROG. The King's prime minister, he too will think.  
Methinks, he'll think our thinking is unthinking.

TANC. Well, now I'll think of naught but Rosalie,  
Cleansing thereby my thoughts for enterprise.       [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*King's Palace in Syracuse.*

*Enter King, ORONTIO, his Prime Minister, and BERNARDO, a Priest, Confessor to the King.*

KING. Bernardo, you have searched my niece, to clutch  
The very kernel of her disposition ?

BERN. I have, my liege ; it is as sweet as sound.  
A truer servant of the holy church  
Lives not uncanonized.

KING. I mean, Bernardo,  
Touching her marriage with my son.

BERN. My liege.  
Devout obedience turns all duties light ;  
Foreruns the will, subjecting it unfelt  
To clerical predominance ; whereby  
Encounter 'twixt desire and duteous need  
Loses its angry pith, and acts like this,  
Where will and wisdom close in glad embrace,  
Are calmly hailed as providential blessings.

KING. Though she has known some summers more than  
Tancred,  
Still wears she green the glistening crown of youth.  
Marriage becomes a Prince. His daily life  
It sanctifies, and plants him in the respect  
Of sober men. Orontio, have you tidings  
Of Tancred ?

ORONTIO. Sire, my messenger, a quick one,



Found not the prince in Florence, nor could learn  
News of him there.

KING.                    These wayward voyagings  
Beseem him not, and have for the throne's heir  
A peril disproportioned to their aim.

BERN. 'Gainst the remitting perils of the sea  
He's armed by provident contrivances  
Of Art, and the picked skill that waits on princes.  
But hourly near him, and as subtly poisonous  
As speechless exhalations from a fen —  
For which there is no antidote but distance —  
Are hotter dangers that assail his soul.

KING. You have before frightened my ear, Bernardo,  
With stormy mutterings against Count Roger;  
And I, with all a father's watchfulness,  
Have hearkened, questioned, probed, and nothing found  
Worse in the count than the irreverence  
Native to youth, which riper years will physic.

BERN. Pardon, my liege; you much misprize this man.  
He's old in thought, and never has been young.  
'Tis his great fault that in youth's levity  
He's wanting. He bemocks our sacred calling,  
Gores custom and time's steadfast usages;  
And with licentious hand seeks to unrobe  
Nature's chaste mysteries. Harmless alone,  
He is, as princely parasite, a sore  
Sickening the healthy heart of Sicily.

KING. Marriage will heal this sore. The warmer fires

Of wedded love consume all lighter joys.  
Love is a whetted knife 'twixt youthful friendships.—  
I hear, Orontio, that you have a purpose  
To let your daughter first behold the world  
In mask.

ORON. 'Tis true, my liege. To-morrow I  
Present my niece and daughter to my friends.  
My brother's orphaned child and my own girl,  
Have grown together in my heart as one.  
Our festal entertainment will lack naught  
But that my King should grace it with his looks.

KING. Count me, my friend, among your grateful guests.—  
Bernardo, be your cleric task, to season  
The good Matilda for her budding duties.

[*Exeunt King and ORONTIO*

BERNARDO, *alone.*

The sovereign church hath duties paramount.  
The single fountain of true piety,  
Self-love in her is one with generous virtue,  
And self-replenishment religious goodness;  
And thence, her heaviest sin were self-neglect,  
Now, through conjunction of our separate loves,—  
Made one by interchange of opposites,—  
Princess Matilda is betrothed to us.  
As rich is she in reverence as gold.  
Marriage with Tancred would imperil both.  
For he, not having an obedient bent,  
Already loves us not; and this his lukeness,—

Without the acid of his scoffing friend,—  
Might turn to hate through dastard jealousy.  
Men are not wrought to piety by women  
So oft as wives are thence distraught by husbands.  
One of our harvest-fields is maidenhood,  
Which sheds its buds in autumn fruit on us.

*Exit.*



KING.            Still, thou wilt lose her ; for,  
Her time is almost come, when she, transplanted  
From the close hot bed of paternal love,  
Must grow out doors, and face, as best she can  
With her own competence, the blasts and frosts  
Of the bleak world's unceasing winter. She  
Is marriageable, and being beautiful  
And high, she will be married. And 'tis best  
That we—who can not war 'gainst Nature's needs,  
Without rebellious danger to our cause—  
Make treaty with strong Nature's wilfulness,  
And thus, in th' act of resignation stamp—  
By one deep pressure of authority—  
Our cooler judgment on young passion's heats.  
Among our topmost nobles have you found,  
Orontio, one worthy of Rosalie ?

ORON. I have not found because I have not sought.  
My kinsman Conrad and myself are pledged,  
By mutual contract early registered,  
To tighten ties of chance with ties of choice.  
His eldest son, Alphonso, and my daughter  
Are by us plighted. He is here to-night,  
To scan young Rosalie, himself unscanned.

KING. The hottest look, even of envy, would—  
Like floods of fiery dawn loosed on red May-buds—  
Inflame her beauties into deeper glow.  
Alphonso is of noble stem, and Rumor  
Echoes his name in lordly notes of praise.—





TANC. Folly and wo are ever close of kin;  
And so 'twill not be comforted or counselled.

ROS. A stubborn heart that will not take kind counsel.

TANC. Condemn it not till you have counselled it.

ROS. Who needs advice is prone to take the bad.

TANC. Too true; and yours, I fear, would not be good.

ROS. Why ask it then?

TANC. Because, if bad—I mean  
Bad by its impotence to cure my ill—  
I should not follow it.

ROS. Why do you think  
My counsel would be bad?

TANC. Because I fear so.  
One of love's follies is, to war with hope.

ROS. Sir Knight, is this the first time we have spoken?

TANC. Fair lady, I could swear that never till now  
Heard I your voice's full melodiousness,  
Nor saw the perfect brilliance of your face;  
And swearing so, I should not be forsworn.

SERVANT. My lady, Lord Orontio bids me say,  
There are new guests who would be greeted.—

MANFRED. I pray you, sir, the lady you just spoke with,  
Is she Orontio's niece?

ROG. You love the lady?

MANF. I think I do, and shall be sure I do,  
If once assured she is Orontio's niece.

ROG. 'Tis then the minister who is your first love,  
His niece your second. You're an office-seeker?

MANF. No, sir; I am Count Manfred of Palermo.

ROG. Sir Count, the lady is Orontio's daughter.

MANF. More worthy still of love than even his niece.

I'm in your debt; tell me how I can pay you.

ROG. I live to serve my friends: let me be yours.

The rich and noble Manfred of Palermo——

MANF. You know me then;——

ROG. Sir Count, attaint me not

In your high thoughts, taxing me ignorant.

MANF. I crave your pardon. Speech and vesture both  
Proclaim the gentleman. Be you my friend.

You know the lady well? You have her ear?

Now, sir, were she my wife——

ROG. Orontio's daughter,——

MANF. The same. Were she my wife, there were not then  
A higher, happier man in Sicily,  
Than I myself, Count Manfred, save the King.

ROG. And prince.

MANF. The prince is not enough a prince.  
He is too learned, and lacks showiness.  
Then he affects not princely things, as feasts  
And horses, priests, pomps, soldiers.—But the lady:  
Use, sir, your tongue for me. I see you know me.  
Convey your knowledge to her ear. Farewell.

I go to please her father with this theme.

[Exit.]

ROG. Convey your knowledge to her ear: ha! ha! ha!  
Oh! you have missed a prodigy.

TANC.

What's that?

ROG. A creature that confounds philosophy :  
 A fellow whose curled head would float in vacuo.  
 His brain insults the laws of gravitation,  
 So gaseous buoyant 'tis with vanity.  
 He's gone to ask Orontio for his daughter.

TANC. For Rosalie ?

ROG. No ; Blanche, whom he believes —  
 With his clear insight trusting me — the daughter.

TANC. This may breed mischief.

ROG. Sport, and nothing more.

TANC. Whenever I've come near to Rosalie,  
 There's one who has so tracked me as he were  
 My very shadow, cast by light from her.  
 My eyes would not play hypocrite, but at him,  
 Ere I could rule them, threw defiant glances.  
 Rogier, this masquerading irks and chafes me.

ROG. To win sweet Blanche, I'd mask it for a year —

ROS. Ha, gentlemen, when did you come from Naples ?

TANC. We are discovered.

ROG. But the half of us.—

Fair vagabonds, we came with you ; for Naples,  
 Wanting the fruitful sunshine of your looks,  
 Grew to a bladeless desert in a night.

ROS. Sir, I perceive, our air of Sicily  
 Rusts not your speech.

ROG. Light is rust's enemy ;  
 And thus are we kept polished by your lustre.

BLAN. Sir Knight, your tongue speaks sunbeams.



ROS. Moonbeams, cousin;  
His light is lunar, caught from us, his Sun.  
But now, sir Moon, come shine with your own beams,  
Unmasking you for supper.

ROG. Nay, not I.

ROS. Your reason.

ROG. Folly masked is not so foolish  
As unmasked. I would neither see nor show  
Folly quite naked. Are you satisfied?

ROS. Entirely — with the folly of your reason;  
And if your friend hath not good freight of wisdom  
Wherewith to ballast such big bales of folly,  
You'll founder ere you end your voyagings.

TANC. Think me not vain; but I, in truth believe,  
That I am wise.

ROS. You have then wiser reasons  
For wisdom than your comrade has for his folly.

TANC. The wisest, and your tongue it is that speaks them.  
Each syllable of yours attests me wise.

ROS. [*To Roger.*] Interpret.

ROG. Nay the proverb bars me.

ROS. The proverb!

ROG. Ay, "a wise speech sleeps in a foolish ear."

BLAN. Cousin, we must begone. If, gentlemen,  
You will not in to supper, we must leave you.

TANC. Think not we are discourteous; but we have  
In Syracuse a mission of great import,  
The which demands we should as yet be secret.



ROS. Good night; and prosper in your embassy.

TANC. Your good will's worth more than a king's credentials.  
 [Exeunt ROSALIE and BLANCHE.

Roger, my spirits flag and I grow heavy.

ROG. Love genders thought faster than rain doth grass,  
 And thought is serious, and seriousness  
 Grows heavy if it lasts; so, when it does,  
 Tracing its sprightly pedigree to love,  
 Your spirits will remount. This is no time  
 For doltish melancholy. Our best wit  
 We need, and whetted to its keenest edge,  
 To shiver the entanglements of custom.

TANC. Your mettle kindles mine, and I am purged  
 Already of the lees of cloudy fancies.

ROG. Our task is subtler than oft falls to princes;  
 To compass liberty through joy, and joy  
 Through love. Then with the three a diadem  
 To build worth all the crowns of tedious kings.  
 Now let's devise the measures for success,  
 And counterplot the plots of adversaries. [Exeunt.

## SCENE II.

*A Public Square in Syracuse.*

*Enter ALPHONSO, MANFRED, and OSMOND.*

MANF. These few days are enough to give me wonder,  
 How one in Syracuse can keep so long  
 A bachelor.

OSM. Palermo is a mine  
As deeply veined with beauty ; but the things  
We have we prize not at their height, for aye  
Stretching beyond us for a better still ; —  
Nature's device to draw us up and onward ; —  
Thus through dissatisfaction with our own  
To satisfy her hungry appetite  
For sunny change and rich variety.

ALPH. You are a talking theorist ; for still  
You hug the wilting shade of singleness.

OSM. 'Tis but a step into the sun.

ALPH. And you  
Feel autumn's coolness creeping on your veins ?

OSM. I know not if't be that : it well may be :  
But since last night I hate what I have loved,  
And am in love with thoughts I've always shunned ;  
I would be the opposite of what I've been,  
Think me a fool for being what I am ;  
And, like a bankrupt, find myself to-day  
Suddenly dispossessed of all I've lived on.  
I'm ready to begin the world anew.

MANF. You have been strongly dosed. Who's your physi-  
cian ?

OSM. Our host Orontio's niece.

MANF. We shall be cousins.

OSM. How so ?

MANF. I've asked Orontio for his daughter.

ALPH. His daughter !

OSM. And how answered he to that ?

MANF. Just as becomes a minister of state ;  
With stateliness and high-bred courtesy.

OSM. And promised you the brilliant Rosalie ?

MANF. A minister of state proceeds by steps.  
In a first interview he does not say,  
In audible words, " Sir, take my daughter." No ;  
That were to cheapen both himself and daughter.  
But he is shrewd ; and being so, will ask,  
What makes against this match, and what makes for it ?  
My friends can doubt not what will be the answer.

ALPH. You have a rival in a visored knight,  
Whose steel-cooped eyes fastened on Rosalie,  
Making her redden with their fiery gaze,  
Such was their glow and hot tenacity ;—  
And yet, methought, her fancies ripened in it,  
Growing more rich and precious from his looks,  
Like a Burgundian vineyard in the sun.

MANF. I'm used to rivals and I dread them not.  
Besides, the knight you speak of is my friend.

ALPH. What is his name ?

MANF. I know it not ; but finding,  
When I accosted him, he knew me well,  
I have bespoke his friendly services.  
I will go seek him. Gentlemen, adieu. [Exit.

OSM. This fellow's tongue filches from words their wealth.  
When I have heard him speak, I would be silent,  
Ashamed to use speech that has been so emptied.

ALPH. The artless gloss of Rosalie's perfection  
Is dulled by the close breath of such a coxcomb.

Osmond, his love makes love ridiculous.

OSM. He speaks for my especial chastisement.

ALPH. Perhaps for mine. What think you of his suit?

OSM. That 'tis not worth a thought.

ALPH. You know his station,

Wide-rooted 'mong the highest, in a soil  
Steeped to the covert rock in quickening gold.

And in these rank and merchantable times,

Gold is a very pope. It cleanseth crime,

Uplifts the vile to purple altitudes,

Sets crowns upon the base, uncrowns the noble,

And with a sensual sneer upon its front,

Usurps the righteous throne of patient virtue.

OSM. Orontio, like most men whose breath is fed  
On the cold heights of laborsome ambition,

Prizes the glitter of life's pithless pomps,

More than its beauties; but he loves his daughter;

And to that love he adds—like all shrewd worldlings—

A scorn of fools. He will not wed his child

To a gilt popinjay. Look to the knight

With burning gaze.

ALPH. But he is Manfred's friend.

OSM. 'Tis only Manfred's tongue that says he is.  
In love trust looks more than the stoutest words.

ALPH. Osmond, let's you and I live bachelors.

OSM. What, are you out of love with love already?

ALPH. Being hardly in, I'm pricked with thorns already.  
I fear there is a briery road before us,  
And we shall get well scratched in pushing through.

OSM. Is it my disposition or my luck ?  
To me the road is a new swath of carpet,  
Inlaid by artful Nature's freshest hand ;  
Soft as a parrot's plumage and as green,  
Bowered by thornless rosebuds, whose sweet breath  
Caresses me, as I trip me along,  
Blithe as a robin to his vernal mate.

ALP. If that's your mood, you ought to be alone ;  
For rhapsody is spoilt by listeners. Adieu.

OSM. Nay, I'm too happy now for solitude.  
We'll look up, Cousin Manfred, and from him  
Learn something of the thorny knight.

[*Exeunt.*]



## ACT III.

—◆—  
SCENE I.ORONTIO'S *Garden.**Enter ROSALIE, and BLANCHE.*

ROS. Nay, we should trust ourselves. We two are strong  
In one another. In thine eyes I look,  
And fortify me with thy innocence.

BLAN. 'Tis thou, dear coz, that givest strength to me.  
Alone, I should not dare to stir in this.  
To maidens the forbidden fruit is freedom :  
So says our father.

ROS. Not for worlds, dear Blanche,  
Would I gainsay so wise and good a father ;  
But yet, I feel rebellious motions in me.  
'The taste of liberty we had in Naples  
Feeds a new appetite, born of itself.  
Scanted in food to this, I can not live.  
Freedom seems now the parent that begat me,  
So strong and fresh is the dear life it brings.—  
What art thou thinking of so soberly ?

BLAN. I'm thinking of the chains that freedom forges.

ROS. And wondering, how that little heart of thine  
Doth furnish metal for the links thereof.

Most true it is, that freedom forges chains ;  
But ever of a subtler property.  
At first, of grossest iron, wherewithal  
To bind the raw and rugged ; then of steel,  
By subtler art wrought to a keen compactness ;  
Of silver next, worn as an ornament,  
That 'neath its burnished folds hides rings of force ;  
And then of kneaded gold, whose yellow sheen  
And ponderous magnificence lure hearts  
Into contentment with their servitude ;  
And later higher still, of precious stones,  
Diamond and ruby intermeshed with gold.  
And when that life beats richer, fuller, better,  
Then ornament and might are interfused,  
Man wearing rule as Earth her atmosphere,  
The circumambient watchman of her wealth,  
Beauty and use being one ; until at last,  
Great freedom grows so skilful strong, her bonds  
All spring self-woven from the core of joy,  
And life, purged by abundant action, is  
A free enchainment, a chained liberty,  
Like the linked multitude of peopling stars,  
As beautiful, as vast, as pure as they.

BLAN. Good Heaven ! Cousin, where learnt you all this ?

ROS. From the great teacher, Love. Am I not apt ?

BLAN. I wish we'd given them meeting within doors.

ROS. This hall of nature is most apposite  
To such an interview. The boundless vault

And steadfast blue of heaven, and nothing less,  
Should be the witnesses of the large hopes  
And sacramental vows of this encounter.

BLAN. You still forget they are unknown to us.

ROS. Dear Blanche, I shall begin to think thou lov'st not,  
Thou art so skeptical. Love is religious;  
It nourisheth a generous faith. Unknown!  
Their names and place and outward circumstance,  
The accidental furnishings of men,  
We know not. But the temper of their souls,  
Their hearts' clean manly quality, we know;  
And if there be, as we have credit for,  
A sifting virtue in a woman's instinct,  
To point, like the divining rod, to where  
There is a spring of truth and courtesy,  
I will forego my use of polished judgment,  
And henceforth grossly follow corporal sense,  
If both of them are not true gentlemen.

BLAN. Oh! they are that. I'll trust my honor to them  
Further than I had thought to trust a man.

ROS. I knew thee, hypocrite, that seemed to chide,  
While inly thou didst thank me for my boldness.—  
They come. They shall at once unmask them quite.

*Enter TANCRED and ROGER.*

What will you augur of Sicilian dames,  
When maidens thus profane their modesty,  
And pluck the angry beard of white-haired Custom,

Holding hushed interviews with new-met strangers?

TANC. Custom is sickly, and had better cast  
His hoary slough, or kill himself outright,  
When he would clog the gait of innocence.

ROS. Customs are often tenderly defensive ;  
And there is one which bids, that gentlemen,  
To ladies who have trusted them so far  
Beyond the sanction of its ordinances,  
Come forth out of the darkness of disguise  
Into the light of chivalrous openness,  
Declaring who and whence and what they are.

*Enter from behind, King and ORONTIO.*

TANC. Heavier on us, the sinners, than on you,  
The sinned against, weighs this unwilled concealment.

KING. Does such concealment fit a royal prince ?  
The son I can forgive.—And you, Sir Count ;  
Warnings I've had, the which I heeded not,  
So honest was my faith in you. But now  
Your acts reprove your friends, reward your foes.

ROS. The warnings which your Majesty has had  
Were juster than your present accusation ;  
Yet were they slanders.

TANC. Sire, on me let fall  
Whatever stroke of blame you will to strike :  
Tancred, not Roger, is the guilty one,  
If guilt can be, unfelt by th' actors of it.

ROS. Prince Tancred !

BLAN. Count Roger!

ORON. You know them not?

ROS. We know them and we know them not.

ORON. What's this?

KING. Speak, and undo the tangled noose wherein,  
Like frightened hares, you all stand wildly snared.

ROS. Your Majesty, in Naples, where we were,  
To sport a month in easeful solitude,  
Two courtly cavaliers did we encounter,  
Sauntering like us on that sweet-tempered shore.  
Bearing and speech announced them gentlemen,  
As their large conversation did attest  
They were, what they avowed themselves to be,  
Scholars in quest of art and knowledge; only  
They swore, they learnt more in an hour's talk  
With our wise selves, than in a year with sages.  
'Twas but a week since there we left them both,  
When yesterevening, through the unlifted vizors  
Of mailed knights, again their voices smote us.

ORON. And where learned you so young the time-cropped  
knowledge  
To know, who is a gentleman, who not?

ROS. Near Naples, honored father; and th' attestors  
Of our discernment are before you now.

ORON. Well, well: but what do you unguarded here?

ROS. Besides the guardianship of these your walls,  
We have, sir, that of our own modesty.

KING. Beshrew me, but your daughter is well-tongued.



I swear, Orontio, that had I a girl,  
I would she might be like to yours in speech.

ORON. My liege, offence is parent of her wit.  
Women find always words to mend their faults.  
Get in: the hot look of the saucy sun  
Will not so quickly stain a maiden's cheek  
As will the world's bold eyes her modesty.  
Women, like pictures, are best seen indoors.

ROS. There to be looked at, never listened to.  
I'm glad I'm not a man.

KING. Your reason, fair one?

ROS. I would not have a picture for my mate.

[*Exeunt ROSALIE and BLANCHE.*]

KING. A witty wench, with will to match her beauty.—  
For you, Count Roger, you have leave to travel  
For three months longer. 'Tis our further wish,  
To-morrow find you not in Sicily.

TANC. I pray you, sire, put like command on me.  
The exile of my friend, for fault of mine,  
Sends me to worse than lonely banishment.  
My conscience will make Syracuse a prison.

KING. The penalty will weigh then heaviest where  
There is most fault. My son must stay at home:  
The state doth need his aidance. 'Tis full time  
Prince Tancred had put hand to that rough helm  
Whose mastering motions he shall one day master.

[*Exeunt King and ORONTIO.*]

TANC. This is unkind and cruel of the King.



Threads shall he wind from Labor's thousand distaffs,  
To weave the cables of humanity.

With his calm strength steadying the eye of truth,  
The golden scales of justice he shall balance,  
Teach Charity to multiply herself,  
And rusted Faith cleanse of impurity.

Harkening the whispers of remotest law,  
This flat firm earth he shall unseat and launch it  
A whirling globe into the vast of space.

And when from Nature's fields he shall have housed  
Heaped harvests of fine knowledge — potent man  
Self-circled with beneficence — he shall  
Unload the world of its wide misery.

TANC. Thy mounting words wound while they profit me,  
Proclaiming through their wisdom my great loss,  
My ears condemned to fast so long a Lent.

ROG. Faith is a common virtue, but being blind,  
Believers fall in ditches. Canst not think  
My wits can ward this petty banishment ?

TANC. Dear friend, thou know'st how easy 'tis for me  
To trust in thee, yielding my thought to thine.  
So do I now ; and yet, my best wits flag,  
Contriving how thou canst escape this exile.

ROG. Dear Tancred, his staid courtiers tell the King  
I am thy evil counsellor. Their plaint  
I will rebuke, by giving thee this counsel :  
Think not so well of kings, so ill of man.  
When thou art king —

TANC.                   Thou shalt be the king's king,  
Through thy imperial sovereignty of thought.

ROG. When thou art king, thou wilt forget Prince Tancred.

TANC. If thee I do forget or cease to love,  
May my heart canker——

ROG.                   Nay, nay; not so solemn.—  
Now, touching this light banishment, thou know'st,  
That in the cozening cozened world we live in,  
Rogue *Seem* does half the work of honest *Be*.  
I'll make him work for us; I'll seem to go——

TANC. And stay?

ROG.                   Not only in security,  
But so that from my shelter I can fling,  
Faster and sharper than if unconstrained,  
Weapons of edge against the enemy.  
'Tis a device will win thy gladdest plaudits.  
But 'tis not mine.

TANC.               Not thine!

ROG.                   Within thy breast  
Dost thou not nurse, at this especial hour,  
A quickner of invention, apter, craftier,  
Than all ambitions or all motions else  
Could ever breed?—'Tis Blanche's thought—as all  
That now I have are hers, how'er I call them—  
Which kindles in my brain with light so strong,  
It gives me sudden art to baffle kings.  
Let's haste to act the highborn stratagem.  
When I unfold it, thou shalt make me vain

With mirthful praise, and swear, 'twill help to prove,  
That where there is a will there is a way.

## SCENE II.

*Apartment of Princess MATILDA, in the Palace.*

BERNARDO *alone.*

BERN. The footsteps of the great tread out rich odors,  
Which they who have the gift can scent afar,  
Infallible as harriers on the trail.  
For me, I've sped the course with huntsman's haste.  
Still freshly on my cheek my memory feels  
The strong breath of repentant peasant knaves;  
And now the haughty gates of palaces  
Obsequious wheel their hinges to embrace me.—  
The air is here with double perfume laden;  
But while I revel in the fragrancy,  
The scented peace I'll break, using the princess  
To subjugate the woman, and the woman  
To curb the princess. 'Tis a game of skill,  
Where one side plays in light, the other in darkness.  
So be it ever, that we may ever win.  
And so it should be; for, the good of light—  
Chief good of goods—would lie unfelt, unhatched,  
Were there no darkness to illuminate.  
And so it shall be by the might of craft;  
The priestly head, like Ætna's at the dawn,  
Blazing for aye in solitary light.



*Enter Princess MATILDA.*

MATIL. Good father, I in haste have sent for you.  
'Tis scarce an hour, the King was here, to urge  
My instant marriage with his son, Prince Tancred.

BERN. Prince Tancred is not now in Syracuse?

MATIL. The King expects him daily.

BERN. This is sudden :  
And has some sudden cause. Was the King earnest?

MATIL. Most earnest, even to anger.

BERN. Ha ! your highness  
Rejected then—

MATIL. I only craved delay.  
This crossed the King ; surprised as well as vexed him.  
He left me, saying, he would send you to me.  
I fear I have done wrong. Now help me, father.  
Your lesson 'twas that propped my falling courage,  
And stayed me 'gainst the King's warm urgency.

BERN. Princess, howe'er it seem, even to yourself,  
I stand not hostile 'twixt the King and you.  
The King is my liege lord ; and my allegiance  
Is paid as fully and as willingly  
As by the readiest subject of the realm.  
My holy office is to join, not sever :  
I am a necessary link 'twixt you  
And God ; and that fine chain that we three make,  
Can not be broken without loss to each,  
Chiefly to you. On me, Heaven hath imposed  
An awful trust—the keeping of your soul.

Princess, your conscience busies me more than my own.

Its safety is imperiled by this marriage.

The prince is tainted with the worst of crimes.

MATIL. In Heaven's name, what crime?

BERN. With heresy.

MATIL. With heresy! so young: it is not so.

What proof have you? so modest, gentle, learned.

BERN. Learning — except our sacred time-crowned lore —  
Is but the Devil's trap to catch weak souls:

It turns men insolent and skeptical.

MATIL. And that Prince Tancred is not, can not be.

BERN. You know the reputation of his friend,  
Count Roger——

MATIL. Oh! I hate him.

BERN. And with cause.

All Sicily should hate the infidel,

The irreverent, audacious questioner,

From whose unchecked espial naught is safe.

A libertine in thought, who would subject

To his bold sensuous gaze and unclean handling

All holiest secrets of the sky and earth.

An atheist so shameless, he would cite

Even Rome's divine authority to trial,

Deny the Pope or motion of the Sun.

MATIL. Is he so wicked?

BERN. Poisoned to the core.

MATIL. The prince, good father, can not be so foul.

BERN. Naught is so ductile as the growing mind.

'Tis shaped by what is nearest : from the moulds,  
Open beside it in its liquid glow,  
It takes its solid form. The prince's thought  
Is Roger's thought engraft on Tancred's stem,  
Whence it will draw sap for its bitterness.  
As easily you may the flame untwist  
That crackles on the hearth, and to each fagot  
Its individual share therein allot,  
As separate Prince Tancred's thought from Roger's ;  
So subtly are their thinkings interchanged.

MATIL. Father, to-morrow send the abbess to me.

[Exit MATILDA.

BERNARDO *alone.*

If our affections be our direst foes—  
As the Church teacheth, that doth never err—  
No Paladin did ever with his blade  
Do more protective duty to a princess  
Than with few words I to Matilda now.  
Passion to quench and overmaster, is,  
To make life strong and pure.—Ha! is it so?  
To crush is not to kill. The affections live,  
Wounded but deathless, and their dripping blood  
Begets upon the wronged despoiled heart.  
Feelings that churn their venom as they crouch  
Within the caverns of the memory.

*Re-enter* MATILDA.

MATIL. Father, the King is quick and peremptory ;  
And royal purposes long entertained,

Are not as light renounced as children's toys.

BERN. Your purposes are not less royal.

MATIL.

For a woman

'Tis hard to stem the anger of a man,

And he a King.

BERN. When the King rages, meet him

As princess: when the father urges, meet him

As woman, whose affections must be wooed,

Not bargained for. The King—I know his nature—

Has not a regal stubbornness of will.

Wilfully blind he is, like other fathers,

And sees not Tancred's sinfulness.

MATIL.

Oh! father,

He's so unthinking, he may still be saved.

BERN. Only through providential chastisement.

Would that he were unthinking. 'Tis his fault

To think too much—the worst fault he can have.

Princess, this Roger;—I have that to tell you,

Will make the frightened blood to flee your cheek

And gallop to its inward citadel.

It is a secret spied by spiritual vision—

The privilege of consecrated priests,

Who, through this heaven-imparted insight, wage

Safe war against demoniac practices.

Thy piety, so purged by sacrifice,

Is of a quality to bear the trust.

Torture thy spotless heart with this damned knowledge:—

Roger of Susa is the Devil's legate,

Commissioned from black Hell, with special office  
To sap the prince and undo Sicily.

MATIL. Father, fail not to send the abbess to me.

[*Exit* MATILDA.

BERNARDO *alone.*

Strong maladies demand strong remedies.  
This dose will either kill or cure.—The Devil  
Should have a brazen monument at Rome  
High as St. Peter's. What were priests without him?—  
Oh! the divinity there is in power,  
That all things it can shape to instruments,  
Sharpening invention to its brightest edge.  
To govern, is to dance on life's top wave,  
Erect in light, above the darkened crowd.  
For us, who vow ourselves to mystic rites,  
And thus do suicide on our dearest part,  
Murdering sweet love, paternity and home,  
Power is our single joy. But ah! 'tis worth  
The all it costs, the dedicated priest  
So high it lifts on pinnacles unapproachable,  
Whence common men look prostrate and abased.  
Power is the Almighty's attribute — and ours.

[*Exit.*

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## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.

*A Hall in the Palace.*

*Enter* CONRADO *and* BARBARA, *meeting.*

BARB. <sup>3</sup>Ha! Conrado; the very man I wished to meet.  
Butlers are then sometimes in the right place.

CON. Who says I am ever in the wrong place?

BARB. Nobody, that I know of.

CON. I know of somebody that says so.

BARB. Who?

CON. Myself. For I say I am in the wrong place now.  
So, good-by, Mrs. Barbara.

BARB. What now, Mr. Dignity? will you play off your royal airs upon me? Though you live in a palace, I know you. Come, answer me three plain questions; and quickly, I'm in haste. Has the Prince quarrelled with his father?—is Count Roger banished?—has Princess Matilda gone into a convent?

CON. Princess Matilda gone into a convent!

BARB. That you don't know; the rest you do.

CON. I did not say that.

BARB. No; but I say it.

CON. Well, if the count is banished, I'm glad of it.

BARB. I thought you would be.

CON. Why so?

BARB. Because you are one of those luckless men born with your heart on the right side instead of the left; so that it is glad and sorry in the wrong place. Give this paper to the prince.

CON. What's in it?

BARB. What's that to you? Are you inspector of petitions? 'Tis from my mistress, the lady Rosalie.

CON. Papers often get those that handle them into trouble.

BARB. I will ask you one question——

CON. Mrs. Barbara, you ask too many questions. That is not the manners of us in the palace.

BARB. No; the tongues of you in the palace move not to deliver outwardly words and thoughts; but to deliver inwardly meats and drinks. Conrado, do you hope to outlive the King?

CON. The King is a score of years my elder, so there is no treason in thinking that I may.

BARB. But it were treason to yourself to forfeit the good will of a king.

CON. That it would be, and therefore——

BARB. And therefore deliver this to the prince, who is prince now only to be king hereafter. Will you not learn, Conrado, that for us poor servants our best friends are the young. The young are generous: besides, they never forget a love-service. He who does it is laid away in their memories between two kisses, and that keeps him warm in their

regard for ever.—But this time I shall not be beholden to you for helping me. Here is the prince himself.

*Enter TANCRED.*

May it please you, sir, I have a petition to your highness.

TANC. Good woman, I am in the mood to grant petitions, being myself most wretched. What a man-tamer is grief! Your kings are too happy. Their hearts should be steeped every night in private sorrow, that their eyes might distil in the day loving tears enough to drown their subjects' griefs. What is your prayer? [*Opens the paper.*] Ha! away—they come. Hold! here is my purse.

*[Retires to the back of the stage.]*

BARB. You see it is good paper; I get gold for it. This way, Conrado; I have something secret to say to you.

CON. No, no; I don't like secrets. Go your ways.

BARB. [*Aside.*] Have I lived forty years, and shall I not make a man follow me. [*She holds up the purse at him. Conrado follows her.*] I know the men. *[Exeunt.*

TANCRED [*advancing*].

What an eclipse is here! Her words are chilling clouds that overhang the light beneath, darkening what first shone out to dazzle and delight me—her precious name. She speaks of ranks and dignities! and bids me cast her from my thought. Bid the earth cast off the sun, dismiss his daily warmth, then blacken in the rayless air.—I must see her. But how? Roger will devise. Whatever can be done, he

will do best and quickest. But for my love for him, I should envy his unchained spirit, so self-less strong, so apt for others' wants. I will go seek him, and in his love and his wisdom find solace and direction. [Exit.

## SCENE II.

*The Same.*

*Enter* King, ORONTIO, Chamberlain, OSMOND, ALPHONSO,  
MANFRED, *and* Attendants.

KING. Where is this messenger from Aragon?

CHAM. May it please your Majesty, he waits without.

KING. Let him at once be ushered to our presence.

[Exit an Attendant.

I hope he brings good tidings from our cousin.

*Re-enter Attendant with Messenger.*

Whate'er your mission, sir, I bid you welcome.

From Aragon I look for naught but good.

MESS. Your Majesty, my master bade me greet you  
With phrases built of warmest epithets;  
And as a token of his royal love,  
Makes me the bearer of a present to you.  
Among the storerooms of his memory,  
He hath not one so richly filled, nor one  
Whence he doth draw more aliment for joy,  
Than that wherein are laid the deeds and words  
Acted and uttered by your Majesty;





MANF. How so ?

ROG. By making something out of nothing.

ALL. A hit ! a hit !

KING. Well opened, fool. Here's money for you.

ROG. [to MANFRED.] Take your share of it.

MANF. Why should I have a share ?

ROG. Because you have borne the burthen of my wit. In Spain we always feed our ass when we stop to dine.

ALL. Good again.

MANF. A fool and his money are soon parted.

ROG. That's for the King. Sire, do you always give money to fools.

KING. It is my custom.

ROG. Then is your Majesty the greatest spendthrift in your realm.

KING. [to Messenger.] Say to your master, that, to judge the metal by its ring, he has sent me a golden gift.

MESS. By your Majesty's permission, I will now aboard.

KING. Must you away so soon ?

MESS. It is my King's command that I return at once.

KING. Heaven speed you with a prosperous wind.

MESS. Francisco, hast thou no message for thy old master ?

ROG. Commend me to his Majesty, and say to him, that I send him no better greeting by you, not because I have none to send ; but because I never put precious things into brittle vessels.

MESS. I'll report you fairly.

[Exit.

KING. Chamberlain, see that Francisco be well cared for.

[*Exeunt King, ORONTIO, Chamberlain,  
and Attendants, followed by ROGER.*]

OSMOND *and* ALPHONSO. Fool! fool! stop, fool!

[OSMOND *runs after him and plucks him by the arm.*]

OSM. Do you not hear us call?

ROG. My ears heard you, but how was my understanding to know which fool you were calling?

OSM. Canst thou be trusted with a message to a lady?

ROG. That depends somewhat on the lady.

OSM. Excellent! Thou hast had successes, Francisco?

ROG. Is that a good leg?

OSM. If you and I are not friends it will be no fault of mine.

ALPH. Well, Francisco, we will trust you; you have an honest face. You will not abuse your opportunities for your own profit against your friends: you'll be a gentleman.

ROG. [*to OSMOND.*] Your friend is an Egyptian?

OSM. An Egyptian!

ROG. Surely he is from no living land, his notions of the gentleman smack so of antiquity.

OSM. He is a noble Sicilian, good Francisco; his name Alphonso; mine is Osmond. These two billets are for the ladies Rosalie and Blanche, daughter and niece of the King's prime minister, Orontio. His house is near by. This deliver to Rosalie from Alphonso, this to Blanche from Osmond; handle this to whet the tongue of our envoy; go and come as quickly as you can, and your purse shall not be the lighter

for your quickness. [*Exeunt, followed by MANFRED, who runs back and calls after the clown.*]

MANF. As thou seemest to know the value of gold, take this.

ROG. 'Tis easier taken than earned. Gold grows here as plenty as garlic.

MANF. That is for this, [*giving a billet,*] the which deliver into the hands of the lady Blanche. Tell her, it comes from Count Manfred of Palermo; on hearing the which, she will read it on the spot. Bring me word that she has done so, and thy fee shall be doubled. These lords of Syracuse know not the value of a love messenger.

ROG. I'll be sworn they thought in their hearts, as we four stood here together, that we were two wise men and two fools.

MANF. Egad, I'm of the same opinion; what say you?

ROG. I like an humble seeming; so, let us not exalt ourselves, but only take them down a peg; and, for the sake of modesty in speech, just say, we were four fools.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

### SCENE III.

*A room in Orontio's house.*

ROSALIE and BLANCHE.

BLAN. Where is thy wit? Loose it upon thyself,  
To whip this girlish humor out of thee.

ROS. No more, sweet Blanche. Oh! would I'd been a  
milkmaid.

BLAN. Had then thy love been bounded to thy cows?  
 As milkmaid thou belike hadst soiled thy pail  
 With tear-drops from a wound more hopeless yet.  
 Love mocks at ranks and man-devised divisions.  
 Cupid delights to be a mischief-maker,  
 Levelling in a night the reverend bournes  
 That have for ages stood against encroachment.

ROS. Henceforth I'll hate all princes.

BLAN. Save one, dear coz.

ROS. And Naples with its balmy Circean air—  
 Would that Vesuvius 'neath a fiery flood  
 Had drowned its treacherous shores, ere I had known them.

BLAN. How quick time flies; or was't but yesterday  
 Thou chidst thy tongue for that it would not forge  
 Words warm enough to paint that Paradise,  
 Where thou hadst been reborn;—that was the phrase.

ROS. Resolve me now, wise Blanche;—for thou art one  
 That lov'st to poise things in thy silent brain,  
 To find their axis, rather than to bark them  
 With trivial-tongue;—resolve me, why it is,  
 That I, against my will, am robbed of will?  
 Why suddenly disseated from my throne  
 Of self-controlment, the most secret chambers  
 Of my high sovereign mind by stranger thoughts  
 Rudely invaded, their old furniture  
 Thrust into corners, while the invaders seize  
 Amazed authority; and captive I,  
 Having nor power nor wish to make obstruction—



As though I'd drunk some deep transforming drug—  
Look wildly on in a strange passiveness.

BLAN. Thou hast drunk deeply of a subtle drug,  
And art transformed with its swift-coursing juice.

But 'tis a transformation like to that,

When in a tardy spring th' impatient Sun,

Piercing the cold flanks of the clodded Earth

With his hot shafts, wakes her to procreant life,

To fill her brow with bloom, her lap with fruit ;

Or when in a dark cave sudden is brandished

A flaming torch, by whose creative fire

New treasures are unbarred, now first beheld

By eyes staring in a pleased wilderment.

Thou art bewildered at the wealth of thought,

Unsealed by heat from thy new-lighted heart,

Which so illumes the mind's vast territory,

That things formless before, start into shape,

To maze thee with their boldness and their beauty ;

And wishes, hitherto unuttered, rule

With an imperial sweetness of allurements,

That makes their tyranny a blessedness.

The present throbs so with a restless motion,

It is not big enough to hold thy life,

Which overruns into a new-born future,

That swells and stretches into solemn depths,

Crowding itself with costly images.

Thou art indeed transformed, dear Rosalie ;

Thou art not what thou wast a month ago ;—



And wouldst not be ; no, not for the whole world.

ROS. No, that I would not ; for I then should part  
From my dear Blanche, who is no more herself,  
And needs soft tending in her lunacy.

Why, coz, so many words thou never spok'st  
In one long day as in this single breath.

Thine was the stillest tongue in Syracuse.

And words so fit and voluble. Good Blanche,

'Tis thou needst comforting : how can I cheer thee ?

BLAN. By bringing me a note like that thou hadst.

ROS. And wilt thou give like answer to it too ?

BLAN. Nay, but the count is not a royal prince ;  
And if he were, I'm not so proud as thou.

ROS. Happy in that : pride is the thorn of love.  
Still happier, that thy love is not misjoined.—  
The count, if banished, had no time to write.

BLAN. To lovers true, time never can be wanting,  
To do love's duties.

ROS. Dost thou doubt his truth ?

BLAN. I'd sooner doubt myself. So far from that,  
Because he does not write, I doubt he's banished.

*Enter BARBARA.*

BARB. Oh ! mistresses, here's the new court-fool,  
Francisco ; the sauciest wag.

ROS. I so like a clown. Bring him in, Barbara.

[*Exit BARBARA.*] Blanche and I are just in the mood to hold  
parley with a fool.

*Re-Enter* BARBARA *with* COUNT ROGER.

Welcome to Syracuse, Francisco. Thou canst but thrive here.  
Under our sun folly ripens faster than figs.

ROG. I' faith, your ladyship, the crop looks promising.

ROS. Tell me, Francisco, why young people are so fond of fools? I hope there's no sin in it.

ROG. In you it is a twofold virtue; for the young like fools because only fools speak the truth; and young women like them, because, did they not, few of them would get husbands.

ROS. When I get one, he shall pay you twenty ducats for that speech.

ROG. May your ladyship be married to-morrow.

ROS. That's not easy; masculine candidates for matrimony are ever scarce.

ROG. So are fish on the top of the water: but, sink your hook well baited, and you are sure to have a bite.

ROS. So, you would have husbands angled for.

ROG. 'Tis the modern fashion. But here at your court men have turned anglers, and use my fingers for hooks. This is to catch the Lady Rosalie. [ROSALIE *seizes the note and opens it.*] This for the Lady Blanche from Signor Osmond. [BLANCHE *takes the note with indifference.*]

ROS. Francisco, this is for shallow water.

ROG. [to BLANCHE.] Will you bite at this, from Count Manfred of Palermo?

BLAN. That is a golden hook, without bait.  
Which of the three dost thou like best?

ROG. The Palerman gentleman.

BLAN. Wherefore?

ROG. [*Taking out the purse.*] He pays best.

BLAN. Art thou so mercenary?

ROG. I but allow its due weight to what is weighty. The universal measurer of values is gold. Does not God plant gold—do not men reap it—do not kings coin it—do not philosophers seek it—do not priests love it—do not women spend it? Shall a fool despise what all men and women prize?

BLAN. As thou thinkest the note is worth the gold thou hadst for it, by giving it back to thee thy wealth will be doubled. [*Offering the note.*]

ROG. Nay, it is but blank paper unread by your ladyship. As the best soil bears no fruit till visited by the sun, this page is barren till it be warmed by light from your eyes.

BLAN. Lest it yield briers, I withhold the light.

ROG. Then will you make yourself a party to a sin.

BLAN. How so?

ROG. By making me commit that of lying. For on my bringing word, that I saw you read his note, the count promised me a purse of gold; and whoever in these times will not lie to compass a purse, had better get himself buried: he'll rot even if he stays above ground.

ROS. Thou art, I fear, a hardened sinner, Francisco. What's the news at court to-day?

BLAN. Is the prince to marry the princess Matilda?

ROS. Is Count Roger banished?

ROG. I must back to the king.—But first I'll answer your

questions. [*Gives them each a note, then exit quickly.*]

BLAN. [*After they have eagerly read the notes.*] Cousin, what thinkst thou of Francisco?

ROS. How canst thou think of him at all?

BLAN. I can think of nothing else.

ROS. And that note—from whom is it?

BLAN. From Francisco.

ROS. His hand delivered it; but whose hand wrote it?

BLAN. Francisco's.

ROS. Francisco, Francisco's! Dear Blanche, thou art beside thyself.

BLAN. Read. [*Giving her the note.*]

ROS. [*Reads.*] "I have thought it wise to make folly the servant to love. Judge of thy power over Roger by the depth of his transformation; and believe, that he who walks in a fool's cap to win thee, would rather lie in his shroud than lose thee.

"As I to you

So is the prince to your cousin true.

"FRANCISCO."

BLAN. Put an absolute faith in the last line; for you know, "only fools speak the truth."

ROS. Thou puttest faith in every line.

BLAN. That I did before I read them. Cousin, without faith, love could not be born; and once born, therein sprouts the grain wherefrom he feeds. So your majesty should set your royal mind at ease.

ROS. My majesty will follow thy good council, wise Blanche.

—I have read of a lady, who from a rank not higher than mine was lifted to one of the mightiest thrones of the earth by her lover; and he, not, like Tancred, endowed with a rectitude and nobleness of nature that made his every act a precedent for the best, but, a polluted, perjured, bloodsmeared miscreant.

[*Exeunt.*



## ACT V.

—◆—  
SCENE I.

*A Room in the Palace.*

COUNT ROGER *alone.*

ROG. [*taking off his fool's cap.*] Despised symbol of folly, how I honor thee! Badge of lowness, how I love thee! Sad will be the day when we part. Thou art a canopy against base uses: a flag of truce among enemies. Thou art a mitre, for thou consecratest me; a crown, for thou givest me power. Under thee I can speak more plainly than a bishop, I am freer than a king.—What a heels-over-head world it is, where contempt may be turned into a handle of strength, where a mask is the best wedge to gain entrance for truth, where deception becomes honest and folly wise. But for weeping, I could be the happiest man in the world by doing naught but laugh at it. But just now there is something higher to do. Our plot thrives: we must be armed for its crisis. The King is passionate though kindly, and Orontio loyal and stern. Their next act may be harsh. Already the people murmur at my banishment, which comes near to the prince; and if Tancred himself be touched, it would be easy, out of their

anger to make a rampart or a battery; for they value and love him. 'Tis so easy for a prince to be beloved. Was there ever a good one that was not? Let the powerful be godlike, and men become angels in their cheerful obedience. Here comes the King in haste; I'll stand apart.

*Enter King, with Attendants.*

KING. They defy, and would deceive me. They shall know me better. Go quickly [*to an Attendant*] to father Bernardo: command him to our presence. The brazen priest! I'll melt his brass!—[*To another Attendant.*] Summon Orontio; say the King would see him instantly. They shall learn that I can unmake them faster than I made them. The ingrates! To uphold my son and niece in their contumacy. The traitors! And they, Matilda and Tancred—am I not their father, uncle, king? Would they beard me? would they rebel? By Heaven! I'll tame them—I'll——

ROG. [*running forward.*] A drum, a drum! I beg your Majesty for a drum.

KING. Dost thou trifle, knave?

ROG. Not I; for the King of Aragon gave me a drum!

KING. What for?

ROG. To choke the ears of an angry man, that he might not hear himself speak; and so, save his conscience from nettles.

KING. Rogue, I'll have thee whipped.

ROG. Will the lashes thou givest me heal the gashes thy tongue gives thyself?

KING. Francisco, I am betrayed: I want a friend.

ROG. I never had but one, and he never betrayed me.

KING. A priceless friend! who was he?

ROG. Myself.

KING. Thou art a wise fool.

ROG. Was your Majesty ever in love?

KING. Ha! Know'st thou what thou dost? Francisco, thou wakest a bitter memory.

ROG. False?

KING. Nay, nay: she was made of truth; by nature most royal, but not by blood. Oh! Francisco, Francisco! Wilt thou think it; oft did I curse my crown, that bade my heart cease its rapturous throbs, and when it could not, turned them to aches. Even now, at times, those days, darting across the waste of years, suddenly confront me, like ruined spirits upbraiding me for a wrong.

ROG. A great wrong to both.

KING. I have expiated it.

ROG. But half, if thou hast a son. One of the privileges of a father—the dearest—is, from his errors to distil wisdom for the bracing of his child; whitening for him with the meridian sun of experience, clouds such as darkened his own life's morning; and thus, by extracting from ancient pangs health for his child, to create for himself a joy deeper than any that Fate had crushed.

KING. How much thou remindest me of the good Nestor, Francisco. We'll talk further.—Here comes Orontio.

*Enter ORONTIO.*

It gives me pain, Orontio, to believe  
That thou wouldst counterwork the purposes  
Of thy liege sovereign, and countenance  
The disobedience of the prince, my son.

ORON. If that your Majesty's old servant could  
So far unlearn the lesson of his duty,  
A sterner punishment would he deserve  
Than ever yet your lenient heart pronounced.

KING. The prince's wayward love for Rosalie  
Is not unknown to you.

ORON. On bare suspicion  
Of aught so mutinous I've schooled my daughter,—  
She not unapt to learn her loyal part.

KING. 'Tis well, Orontio, well: I was too hasty.  
Thy calm fidelity, I should have known,  
Were proof against even an unduteous thought.  
Tancred I shall forbid to see your daughter.  
But he, being warm and wilful, may not heed  
Such prohibition. Wherefore I commit  
His disobedience to your watchfulness;  
With order, that you punish with arrest  
The breach of my command.

ORON. 'T is a harsh office  
Your Majesty imposes.

KING. Be it so.  
Harshness and duty are at times one act.



This act is mine : your warrant is from me.

Use that, and send him guarded to his chamber.

The rebel must be cropped before he blossom.

ROG. Did your Majesty ever ride on a mule backward ?

KING. No, fool.

ROG. 'Tis an exercise I commend to your Majesty.

KING. Wherefor ?

ROG. Why, when the stubborn rascal kicks up behind he kicks into your face.

KING. What's that to the point ?

ROG. It's the best point whence to behold the effect of blows on a self-willed brute.

*Enter* BERNARDO.

KING. Bernardo, what means this sudden passion of Matilda for a convent ? The affections of a princess should obey her confessor ; and thou didst give me to think the will of Matilda lay in thy hand.

BERN. My presumption is rebuked by the princess's piety. Her will has been moulded by a higher than I am. Priests can do much : they are not omnipotent.

ROG. That's a truth ; and if his reverence has many such he undoes a proverb we have in Spain.

KING. What's that ?

ROG. That a priest's pate is as full of lies as a virtuous hen is of eggs at Easter.

BERN. Profane trifler, keep thy buffooneries for occasions that fit them.



KING. Nay, Bernardo; if with our wit we can not parry the fool's thrusts, we must do it with our consciences.

ROG. So that reverences that have neither conscience nor wit must keep out of the fool's way.

BERN. I wonder that your Majesty takes delight in this fellow's unwashed insolence.

ROG. If things were found only where they give delight, your face, sir priest, would be for ever fixed before a looking-glass.

BERN. Scoundrel, but for this presence I would chastise thee.

ROG. Lighten as you will, sir, you have but one quality of thunder—your face would turn cream.

KING. Enough, enough, Francisco.—Bernardo, priestly government having failed to rule the princess, royal shall be tried. Return hither two hours hence to witness the trial. Matilda and Tancred shall both be here. Orontio, bring hither Rosalie and Blanche, and let Alphonso, Osmond, and Count Manfred, be summoned. The welfare of these young people must be guarded against their ignorance and the crudity of their wills. [*Exeunt.*

ROG. [*before going off.*] A few people grow wiser as they grow older; but kings are not of the number.

## SCENE II.

*A Room in Orontio's House.*

*Enter ROSALIE.*

ROS. Why so much dread what I so much desire?  
His coming I do fear; and came he not,  
I'd rail at fear that it had banished him.  
My weakness will be yet too strong for me.  
Pride and my maiden modesty, where are ye?  
Gone with the vaunted puissance of my will,—  
Cold vapors drunk by the spring sun of love;  
Leaving me pervious as the lake's white breast,  
Defenceless bared to thirsty summer's beams,  
Which quiver flaming through its mystic depths.  
I am as helpless as an unweaned child.  
Why not as innocent?—Come, helpful Truth,  
Be thou my strength! Gird me against myself,  
Against Self-Love's perfidious subtleties.  
Away, low Fear! vile serf to Falsity.  
Proud Boldness, come! brother to high-bred Candor.  
Away, too, virgin Coyness! for to Truth  
Even youngest Modesty can trust herself,  
And wilt no blossom of her roseate wreath.

*Enter TANCRED.*

TANC. Fair Rosalie, a dearer privilege  
Than this I count not in my favored life.

ROS. Your highness' generosity misnames

A privilege what is a simple right,  
Won by your rank ere 'twas so by your kindness.

TANC. The breath that calls me kind proves you unkind.

ROS. Then are my words blind traitors to their speaker.

TANC. Speaking of rank, which was not in your thought?

ROS. Nor I, nor any one, nay, not yourself,  
Can think of you disjointed from your rank.  
Rank is a something grows into the blood :  
You can not throw it off as 'twere a cloak.

TANC. If it do cumber me I can and will.

ROS. You are so cumbered for the general good.  
Unlike to low-born care, which drags down lower,  
Your burthen lifts you on its loftiness,  
Bearing along promoted multitudes.  
Oh! 'tis divine, to sit upon a seat,  
So sacred high, so founded in its might,  
That, issuing thence, deeds are medicinal,  
Blessing with ceaseless flood the fevered million,  
And words outvoice Olympian thunderbolts.

TANC. You make me fall in love with royalty,  
So grandly you conceive its righteous office.  
The throne, till now a barren steep, looms up  
A longed-for tufted island; while in thee,  
Imagination kindling on itself,  
Brandishes her torch and beckons thee to follow  
To that proud seat thy words so deftly build,  
There to enring thy temples with a crown,  
The tribute of a heart grown rich through thee.

ROS. Prince, your heart beats not for yourself alone :  
Within it palpitates a Nation's life.  
You are too large for private joy or grief,  
Which melt before the sun of public needs.  
Custom and fitness and paternal law,—  
Whose triple strength holds duty in their thrall,—  
O'errule a prince's destiny. For me  
You are too high, and I for you too low.  
Submit me to our lots— which are so blest,  
That to complain of them were blasphemy—  
And our first meeting let us look upon  
As Fortune's spiteful trickery, wherewith  
She takes delight to baffle mortal wills.

TANC. To mould one's destiny is nobler far  
Than to inherit it; and to a will  
Steadfast and crafty, Fortune proves a coward,  
Who yields, then serves whom she had combated.  
But better can I triumph over her,  
Throwing away her sugared poisonous gifts,  
And from the dangerous throne leaping down gladly  
Into thy arms. For this there's precedent.  
Often have kings descended from their seats;  
Sometimes by willing resignation; oftener  
By noiseless force of hostile circumstance,  
Or harsh constraint of prosperous adversaries.  
And shall not I—untasted yet the sweets  
Of that great feast, whose thoughts have never swum  
On royal hopes, committed as they are



To Nature's deeper joys, and calm pursuit  
 Of holy knowledge—shall not I descend,  
 When—like glad snowflakes that come swiftly dancing  
 From freezing heights, to melt them on the warm earth  
 And swell its fruitful currents—my descent  
 Shall be from frosty gloom to sunny joy.  
 But no: I will not down; thou shalt mount with me.  
 For nothing less than queen did Nature mould thee

*Enter from behind, ORONTIO, with Guards.*

In such pre-eminent proportions——

ORON. Prince, I arrest you by the King's high order.

TANC. Arrest me! What new tyranny is this?

ORON. You, Rosalie, withdraw into your chamber.

[*Exit ROSALIE.*]

TANC. Am I a common subject of the King,  
 That he thus outrages my will and person?

ORON. Your highness knows me for the crown's sworn  
 servant,

Who execute commands unquestioning.

TANC. I will obey. Lead on then to the prison.

ORON. Your highness is no vulgar prisoner.

Your own apartment is your prison, till  
 His Majesty shall please thence to release you.

TANC. His Majesty may find it not so easy  
 To get me out as put me in. Lead on. [*Exit, guarded.*]

ORONTIO, *alone.*

It is a fratricidal combat, bitter



And cruel, when duty and love conflict.  
This is the roughest day that e'er I lived.—  
Others must do the rest.— What a great light  
Blazes above my house so suddenly !  
Shall it be quenched ? Man should not be so tempted.—  
My daughter, my beautiful child ! Thou art,  
As never woman was, fit for a throne.—  
God's will be done, not mine. [Exit.

## SCENE III.

*A Hall in the Palace.*

*Enter ALPHONSO, OSMOND, MANFRED, severally.*

ALPH. Heard you the news ?

OSM. Prince Tancred is arrested.

ALPH. Ay, in Orontio's house, by the King's order.

MANF. For what ?

OSM. For disobedience to the King.

ALPH. And love for Rosalie. The King desires his marriage with Matilda. He refuses, and seeking interview with Rosalie, was by her father, in her presence, arrested.

MANF. Have you been summoned hither by the king ?

ALPH. I have.

OSM. And so have I.

MANF. What may this mean ?

ALPH. We soon shall know ; here comes his majesty.

*Enter King, Chamberlain, Attendants, ROGER, as clown, on one side; on the other, ORONTIO, ROSALIE, BLANCHE, BERNARDO.*

KING. Chamberlain, where is the princess?

CHAM. This letter, addressed to your majesty, just now delivered into my hands, is from her highness.

KING. Read it, Orontio.

ORON. [*Reads.*] "I beseech the King to forgive me: I beseech my father to forgive me. The hand of God has guided my blind footsteps, and led me to the convent of St. Cecilia as my only home on earth.

"MATILDA."

KING. Poor child! too good art thou to need forgiveness of guilty man. Well; it may be thou hast done the best for thyself. Thou wast too guileless for this pitfall of a world.—

[*A tumult heard without.*]

What is that noise?

CHAM. [*Coming from the window.*] The people, sire demand that the prince be liberated.

KING. Where is the prince? He should be here.

AN ATT. Sire, he refuses to leave his room.

KING. Command him in our name. [*Exit Attendant.*

[*Tumult increases.*]

Where is the captain of the guard?

*Enter Captain.*

Captain, what means this mob at the very gates of the Palace?

CAPT. Your majesty, it is no common mob. The people are assembled in a multitude of many thousands.

*Re-Enter Attendant.*

ATT. Sire, I delivered your command to the prince. His highness bids me dutifully say to your Majesty, that he prays you to give him his liberty. Here he would be no freer than in his chamber ; and so he refuses to quit it.

KING. Besieged in our palace by our people, and our son claiming to be absolved from our rule. Be it so. Tell Prince Tancred he shall be free to do, go, speak, act, as he in his ripe wisdom shall choose. [*Exit Attendant.*] Captain, throw open the portals of the Palace to the populace, and bid the new sovereign take possession. [*Exit Captain.*] Francisco, we will teach you in Sicily things that you would never have learnt in Spain.

ROG. I am glad, sire, to profit so much by travel. Spain is a country wherein one learns never a new thing.

*Re-Enter Captain.*

CAPT. The people cry, "Long life to the King," and are dispersing.

*Enter TANCRED, and kneels before the King.*

KING. Nay, Tancred, rise. For a man so free as you now are, this obeisance is unbecoming.

TANC. [*Rising.*] I pray your Majesty, mock me not. More than ever I am your dutiful son and subject. The liberty you have given me I would use within the sacred bounds of right ; seeking through it to fill more fruitfully the measures of my life ; wronging no man, least of all your Majesty. [*He advances to ROSALIE, and taking her hand, says to ORONTIO,*

*who stands next to her*] have I your permission? [ORONTIO *with dignity and feeling, acquiesces without words.* TANCRED *then returns with ROSALIE to the King, and, both kneeling before him, says:*] Father, we ask thy benediction.

KING. [*With emotion.*] my blessing on you both. Rise up, my daughter. [*They rise.*]

TANC. To crown this day's great happiness, I have one more petition to your majesty.

KING. 'Tis granted ere 'tis named.

TANC. The recall of my friend, Count Roger.

KING. Herald, proclaim the pardon and recall from banishment of Count Roger of Susa.

TANC. First, I crave of your Majesty and these gentlemen forgiveness to the count for any and all wrongs real or imagined up to this hour, by him committed against any one of them.

ALL. Granted most fully.

HERALD. Know all men, that by his Majesty's decree——

ROG. Speak louder; so that should the count happen to be in Germany, he may hear you. [*Exit.*]

HERALD. Know all men, that by his Majesty's decree, Count Roger of Susa is hereby recalled from banishment.

KING. Orontio—my son choosing for himself has chosen so well—trust the discretion of your niece to do the same.

ORON. Sire, I have ever found her trustworthy, and readily yield her this liberty.

KING. Come, Blanche; your husband shall be a duke: name him.

BLAN. Your Majesty does not jest?



KING. Nay, I pledge to you my royal word.

BLAN. Father——

ORON. Good Blanche, choose : thy choice shall be mine.

BLAN. I choose Francisco.

KING, ORONTIO, and *Others*. The clown !

BLAN. The same.

KING. He is Duke Francisco.

ROG. [*Running in.*] Here I am, your Majesty. [*Kneels.*]  
[*As the King gazes at him, he takes off the fool's cap.*]

KING and *Others*. Count Roger !

ROG. Who will not rise till he has your Majesty's forgiveness.

KING. That Count Roger shall never have : it is for the duke. Rise up, Duke Roger. [*Roger rises.*] Who but yourself could have played us so shrewd a trick ?

ROG. What king but your Majesty would have forgiven it so generously ?

KING. This ends very like a comedy, where, albeit the young have their own way, things turn out happily. Well, Orontio, let us take revenge, in the wish, that their children may do as well.

ROG. We all have cause to be satisfied :—your Majesty, in that the prince your son is shown to have a heart that beats healthily, a manly will—the prime virtue in a ruler—and qualities that win the love of the people, wherein lies the strength of a kingdom ;—you, Orontio, that having given a life of high labor to the service of the crown, the crown shall pass to the heirs of your blood, and thus your fidelity as parent



and minister receive a truly regal recompense;—you, Alphonso, that not the wills of others have bound you in those bonds which are only then pure when entered into spontaneously;—you, noble Osmond, that you have not exchanged the tried comforts of single freedom for the untried blessings of yokedom, and that you are still the conspicuous chief of bachelors, instead of being merged in the common herd of the married.

OSM. I like the phrases “herd” and “yokedom.”

ROG. I perceive you are already comforted;—for you, Count Manfred, think of the maidens of Palermo, and to what rejoicing they will give themselves when you return to them unmarried;—for me, my tongue, though, as you perceive, not tied by modesty, has no craft to speak my contentment.—It remains but that you be satisfied; [*to the Audience.*]

And that you will be, if our Play  
 Has waked your better thought,  
 And then illumed it with the ray  
 In the calm glow of beauty wrought.  
 It is the Poet's hallowed part,  
 So regally to speak the truth,  
 That it shall stir the ready heart,  
 Like morning sunbeam sleeping youth.  
 His peerless office is, to enrich  
 The mind with its own beauties,  
 Tuning its chords to the high pitch  
 Of sweet ideal duties.

[*Exeunt.*]

LIKE UNTO LIKE.

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ROBERTO, *a wealthy Citizen of Florence.*

ERNESTO, *his Friend.*

FERNANDO, *a Duke.*

IGNAZIO, *an Abbé.*

ALONZO, *an Artist.*

FILIPPO, *a Gentleman of Padua.*

OTTAVIO, *a Florentine.*

BERTO, *Steward to ROBERTO.*

CECILIA, *Daughter of ROBERTO.*

LEONORA, *Widowed Daughter-in-Law of ROBERTO.*

DUCHESS, *Mother of FERNANDO.*

Ladies, Gentlemen, *and* Attendants.

*Scene*—FLORENCE, *in* 1502.







ERN. A false friend or an enemy might be that.  
Prospects are sirens, heard through knavish mists,  
Singing us ofttimes from a founded safety  
To shoreless wastes;—a disembodied voice,  
Grudging the bodied sounds of present joy.

ROB. Art thou already past the age of hope?

ERN. Ay; and now starve upon its promises.  
But, tell me, what new feather tickles you?

ROB. The Duke Fernando asks me for my daughter.

ERN. Ha! Cecilia, Cecilia! Fernando!  
Cold, proud, self-loving. He a husband for—  
Oh! can you, can you, but in fleetest thought,  
In twinkling fancy, hold such too conjoined?  
Roberto, pardon me; your child you love,  
Love as a parent only loves: the woman,  
Who is your child, you see not on her height.

ROB. Nay, I would lift her to the jewelled height,  
Endowed for her pre-excellence.. Than she  
Who will sit easier on a ducal seat?

ERN. No seat is easy when the heart doth ache.  
But, dear Roberto, your old friend of Padua;  
The bond with him has been a two-fold joy,  
A memory and a hope;—

ROB. By him dissolved.  
His boy, he says, shall mate himself. He'll send him  
To Florence; and no tidings thence, more ripe  
To gladden him, than that my child and his  
By mutual preference have resealed our contract.

ERN. Blest in his father is that son, and back  
Rebounds the blessing from his heart; for I,  
Knowing this pledge, by deputy have watched  
His unsoiled growth. His parts are firm'd by truth;  
And so far as the unwrit book of manhood  
Can in the preface of frank youth be read,  
His life is dedicate to worthiness.  
When comes he?

ROB. I know not, and when he comes  
Shall welcome him as my friend's son; no more.

ERN. But should he ratify his father's pledge.

ROB. His father has revoked that ancient pledge.  
I'm free to bind my child in other ties.

ERN. You will not force or thwart her dispositions.

ROB. So passive and obedient is her nature,  
Her duties forge her will. Her joys run fullest  
In channels scooped by other's predilections.

ERN. The affections live on self-selected food:  
Free choice is parcel of their very life;  
That balked, they fester.

ROB. In this town, Ernesto,  
There are how many thousands married pairs.  
Is there in every pair some special fitness,  
Whereby, from each distinct duality,  
Is born a happiness not else potential?  
Or, can we not believe, that most or all  
Of the components of these many pairs,  
Coupled to others, had still reaped a good

Equal to what they now have compassed ?  
 Outward conditions oftenest rule in matching.  
 The laborer mates him with his like ; the trader  
 A trader's daughter weds ; wealth marries wealth ;  
 The courtier seeks his bride among the great.  
 Interest, ambition, accident, caprice,  
 Control or guide affection's bent ; and thus,  
 Chance more than choice picks out the wedded mate.

ERN. Thus is deep Nature's order contravened,  
 And th' inward true thrall'd to the outward false.

*Enter BERTO with a Letter.*

BERTO. Signor, a letter from the Duke Fernando.

ROB. [*After hastily reading the letter.*] Ernesto, pardon me,  
 but I must leave you. [*Exit.*

ERN. Berto, I know you may be trusted ; know you  
 As much of me ?

BERTO. Signor, you honor me.

ERN. Nay, nay.

Berto, you love your mistress.

BERTO. Her own father

Loves her not more.

ERN. Perhaps he loves her less.

BERTO. What mean you, signor ?

ERN. Duke Fernando, love you him ?

BERTO. As I love wolves.

ERN. This wolf would rob your roost.

He seeks to wed Cecilia.

BERTO. He! Cecilia!

ERN. Fernando and Cecilia.

BERTO. Know you this?

ERN. To make it known Roberto summoned me.

BERTO. For counsel?

ERN. Nay, I fear he is past counsel;

With mien so confident did he impart it;

As 'twere an act his thought and will had signed.

BERTO. Signor Ernesto, you know me for a cheery frank buffoon, bred in this house, and borne with for my faithfulness. Signor, but for the Lady Cecilia, I had been a sour villain. Believe me, sir, by the power of goodness am I transformed into an honest happy knave.

ERN. Good Berto, thou deserv'dst thy precious fortune.

Thou feel'st this sunshine. For herself, she's one,

Who, from her eye, tongue, hand, drops goodness; and,

Like May, breathing on frosted violets,

Melts where she comes cold evil in her path.

But this Fernando, this examine duke,

He will not be transmutable by goodness.

Rather he'll quench warm Cecil's generous life,

Killing with coldness her pure heats; like winds

That angry strike the trembling blossoms down,

And then whip out of them their sweetened breath.

Hard is't to say, good Berto, but 'tis true;

This daughter needs protection 'gainst her father.

BERTO. Signor, my master's thoughts and hopes and dreams  
Are now but titles, rank and eminence.



ERN. And he, forgetful of his own hot youth,  
Would deal with this dear child's unblown affections,  
As though, instead of being life's sacred marrow,  
They were counters to score ambition's game.  
Berto, we'll countermine ambition's craft.  
Let us about it. We have both some means.  
Art we will dash with boldness. Such a marriage  
Were sacrilege. Our cause is holy. [Exeunt.

## SCENE II.

ALONZO'S *Studio*.ALONZO, *alone*.

With every breath the fertile air is sweeter,  
Each fragrant hour with sunnier beauty flushed.  
If at its base life is so glad and great,  
What will it be upon its boundless top?  
Like wildered traveller on white Alpine crest,  
I shall lack faculty: I lack it now.  
My senses reel under their perfumed load;  
And glittering visions throng, faster and grander  
Than my slow hand can seize. Too weak am I  
For my strong inwardness. A very God  
In plastic swiftness I should be, to body  
The blazing forms that sprout upon my brain,  
Peopling the silent temples of the mind  
With gorgeousness. But I shape only shadows.  
Courage and Faith: these be my arms and armor.  
Imagined beauty breeds upon the soul;



What though the offspring wear no present feature,  
 Warm Time shall ripen into sinewy life  
 The boldest thoughts' most choice imaginations,  
 Therewith to build the great hereafter. Glorious,  
 Divine 'twill be, one tiniest stone to bring  
 To the majestic pile. [*Knocking at the door.*]

Who's there? come in.

*Enter FILIPPO.*

Filippo!

FIL. Dear Alonzo!— Oh! I see  
 Thou art thyself; thou art but changed, to be  
 Still more thyself.

ALON. And thou: these four short years  
 Have only sported with thy youth.

FIL. And I  
 With them. I shame to tell thee, dear Alonzo,  
 I am as light as aye, and learn no wisdom.

ALON. Nay; to the true, Wisdom comes of herself,  
 And takes delight in coming; while the false,  
 With all their might, can't win her confidence.  
 Ere thou art gray, graybeards shall be thy pupils.  
 But what, save my good angel, brings thee hither?

FIL. Florence brings me to Florence. I am one  
 Of the great flock that hither bleating runs,  
 To be, here in this beauteous pen of learning,  
 Fleeced of our ignorance. Then thou art here;  
 And thy good angel ever has been mine.

Lastly—I've come to seek a wife.

ALON.

A wife!

FIL. About a score of years ago, my father—  
With that farsightedness that fathers have—  
From Padua spied one in a cradle here.

ALON. Infant betrothment signed by parents.

FIL.

Ay;

On one condition, that on either part  
The contract might at will be abrogated.  
And so it is; unless myself rebind it,  
The lady and her father both consenting.  
Now hear my scheme. That I be not prejudged  
For good or ill, and be more free to judge,  
I will be seen unknown, and see unpledged.  
Therefore, in Florence I am not Filippo  
Of Padua, but Valerio a Venetian.  
Knowest thou the rich Roberto?

ALON.

Roberto!

FIL. 'Tis he who was to be my father-in-law.

ALON. What thou hast partly forfeited! the flower  
Of Tuscany.

FIL

So fair?

ALON.

In drawing her

My hopeless pencil seizes grace ideal;  
And shall my image near her perfectness,  
I shall be bold to cope unseen Madonnas.

FIL. Show me this painted image.

ALON.

'Tis not here,

And barely touched. Twice only have I seen her.  
 At noon she sits again. This suits thy plot.  
 First thou shalt see Da Vinci's great cartoon,  
 And then the masterpi ce of Nature. Come. [Exeunt.

## SCENE III.

*A Room in ROBERTO'S House.*

*Enter ERNESTO and BERTO.*

ERN. My suspicion, Berto, has been quickly translated into knowledge. A villanous plot. Cecilia is the price Roberto pays Fernando for making him gonfalonier.

BERTO. Roberto gonfalonier!

ERN. Ay; the plotters are at work; Fernando's minions and Roberto's ducats already trot hand in hand through the by-ways of Florence.

BERTO. Signor, think you the Signor Roberto fit for this high office?

ERN. Thou rogue; thou shouldst have been an abb , thou art so seeming innocent.

BERTO. I prophesy an eclipse. We shall have the Medici back.

ERN. And deserve them. When a people persists in choosing wrongly, it jeopardds the right to choose. But Roberto is not yet chosen. Fernando, 'tis true, has power, noble though he be; for rank that has long been rooted, will, when cut down, throw up suckers. Yet by none is he beloved, and by all honest men, hated. Florentines, as strong as he, would

like to thwart him. If we can baffle Fernando's influence on the election, we defeat the marriage; and if we can defeat the marriage, we prevent the election. Our twofold aims double our chance of success.—I have, moreover, good tidings from my sentinel in Padua. Filippo, of whom I have told you, is on his way hither in disguise. He is a friend of the painter Alonzo, and is to pass for a Venetian. Alonzo comes for another sitting presently. I will return to sift from him what I can. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter CECILIA and LEONORA.*

CEC. Dear Leonora, canst thou not to day  
Lend me a heartful of thy cheerfulness?

LEON. Lend thee or give my heart's whole joy I will,  
And yawn a week in empty mirthlessness,  
So thou wilt smile as thou didst yesterday.  
Thou art unwonted sad: what hast thou, sister?

CEC. Words from my father, they have made me sad;  
Which should not be, and never was before.

LEON. Sweet sis, fathers were made to balk their daughters,  
And better them by balking. 'Tis their duty:  
Thine is, to let thyself be balked and bettered,  
Learning with pretty proneness thy first lesson  
In virtue. Would there were some other way.

CEC. My father has no thought but for my good. [*Sighing.*]

LEON. A most rare good, that makes thee sigh to speak of.  
A good, methinks, one might be selfish with,  
Giving a friend the larger lump thereof.



Come, I'll be prodigal, halving it with thee.

Oh! Cecil, is't a husband?

CEC. Thy fast tongue

Has overta'en the truth.

LEON. Thou dost not jest?

CEC. Would that I did.

LEON. Wouldst be a child for ever?

For what hast thou been suckled, schooled, arrayed?

Since first thy lashes parted to the sun,

No beam has spurred thy growth, but daily graved

More deeply on thy pulse the one word, *wife*.

Therein is locked thy destiny, thyself.

CEC. Good Leonora, are husbands all alike?

LEON. Ah, there's the knot that ravel's up the skein.

CEC. Thinkst thou life could wind smoothly with Fernando?

LEON. The duke? Is he thy suitor? thou a duchess?

Tall, handsome, noble, and thy father's choice —

CEC. Dear sister, be not bribed by rank and looks,

The man, Fernando, what of him?

LEON. His height

And title are the best of him. And yet,

In the dry dearth of men, these go for much.

CEC. Oh! can I wed and love a proud cold man?

LEON, To-day thou couldst not; but a week or month

Works headlong transformations. Love delights

In contraries; and were the cold to wed

Only the cold, frost would usurp the world,

And men soon turn to icicles.



*Enter* BERTO.

BERTO.

Signor Ernesto

*Enter* ERNESTO.

ERN. I've come, Cecilia, to befriend your picture,  
Abetting with my tongue Alonzo's pencil.  
To wordy war I challenge Leonora;  
That we, by wisdom, and by wit of speech,  
May so your fancy ravish, that your soul,  
Charmed to your face, the painter, thence enkindled,  
Shall fire the frigid canvass.

BERTO.

Signor Alonzo.

*Enter* ALONZO and FILIPPO.

ALON. Signora, I have used the privilege,  
So hospitably given, and bring my friend,  
Signor Valerio, who, fresh come from Venice,  
Will, if so please you, rend the sitting's tedium  
With latest martial news, or recent feats  
Of great Giorgione and the greater Titian,  
Champions of Art so nobly confident,  
They throw the gauntlet down to Tuscany.

CEC. Signor, welcome to Florence, and our house.  
Of gorgeous Venice we shall gladly hear.

FIL. Lady, I shall be grateful if you'll listen  
To partial speech of Venice; yet to-day,  
So lively is my mind with Florence self,  
All distant images seem colorless.

ERN. A Florentine bids you be welcome, sir,

To his fair city and to all it holds  
That may or profit or divert you.

FIL.

Signor,

The high renown of Florence, I perceive,  
Finds echo in its townsmen's courtesy.

ALON. Noble Ernesto, there's no other man  
I more delight to thank than you. Believe me,  
My friend is worthy, sir, of your best will.

ERN. His face, Alonzo, is your warrant's seal.

[*Aside to BERTO.*] The rogue tho' comes with fib upon his lips.

ALON. [*To CECILIA.*] Signora, will you sit.

[*CECILIA takes her seat; ALONZO adjusts his easel;  
the others sit; and then the curtain drops.*]

## ACT II.

—◆—  
SCENE I.

*A Room in ROBERTO'S House.*

ROBERTO, *alone.*

ROB. The virtue of a girl is modesty,  
Which were in men pale cowardice. To know  
One's fitness for high places; then, to prove  
The knowledge by bold deed, is, to fulfil  
Nature's robust decree. Faint-hearted fools,  
None others, snub their opportunities.  
Fortune bears malice: she forgives not those,  
But whips with hate, who slight her coy advances.  
This will not I; but through her sudden love  
Wed me to greatness and its lofty joys.  
The top place 'mong the haughty few I'll win;  
The many's shout shall peal for my proud ear;  
Where'er I move shall glare the signs of homage—  
The deferential pause of passers-by,  
The lifted bonnet and obedient bow;  
My every word with wisdom shall be freighted  
By yielded wills and bribed imaginations;

The chair of state, the seat of dignity,  
There will I sit, circled with regal light,  
The focus high of a hushed crowd submissive,  
Agape to kiss the fiat of authority.

*Enter BERTO.*

How now, Berto, what hast thou learnt?

BERTO. Signor, when a man goes into the street, and that in a city so learned as Florence, if when he comes home he can tell what he has learnt, he is too wise for his fellows, and is company fit only for himself.

ROB. Berto, thou art no licensed jester; take not his liberties so often. No more foolery. Whom hast thou seen? what didst thou hear about the election?

BERTO. I saw Bartolomeo, the vintner; I saw Adolpho, the wool-dealer; I saw Biagio, the glovier; I saw Lattanzio, the shoemaker; I saw Nicolini, the armorer; I saw—

ROB. All good men; how will they vote?

BERTO. Every man of them against your honor. Of all I spoke with I found but one citizen for you.

ROB. Who was he?

BERTO. Floriano, the half-starved baker.

ROB. I know Floriano; he's shrewd though poor. Berto, in choice of official men, the honest poor are cleaner in their preferences, higher in their judgments, than the prosperous burghers. The partialities of fat citizens are apt to be poisoned by self-seeking.

BERTO. Judge, signor, of Floriano's judgment: when I

told him of the duke, he swore, he'd rather live on his own crusts than vote for a friend of Fernando.

ROB. Knave, thou consortest but with knaves. These rascals are all bought by Soderini.

BERTO. It may be. Have you heard, signor, the good news about the duke?

ROB. Ha! no: what is it?

BERTO. They say, that digging a well—the duke is one of the thirstiest of mortals—digging a well in his garden—your honor knows this garden, near the Roman gate, close upon the studio of—

ROB. Ay, ay; the news, the good news.

BERTO. The diggers had got but little below the surface, when they struck upon a gold vein. The duke being fond of old things, to make good the old adage—"easy come, easy go,"—throws the gold among the voters by handfuls, as though there were no more virtue in it than in holy water.

ROB. [*Half to himself.*] Saucy varlet.

*Enter an Attendant.*

ATTEN. The Abbé Ignazio.

BERTO. [*Aside.*] Now for sweet words from bitter breast. Good-by to truth where abbés are welcome. This reverend tongue is a sponge to wipe out good and drop malice. Here's one of the tigers that set the mob on the brave Savonarola. Rather than not hate him I'd forego my prayers.

*Enter the Abbé.*

ROB. Signor, I'm proud to have you cross my threshold.



IGN. For me, Signor Roberto, proud am I  
That such occasions bring me. From our friend,  
The duke, I come, the bearer—who is this?

ROB. Only my major-domo. Speak your mind.

IGN. I come the happy bearer of good tidings.  
Your cause—the cause of all true Florentines—  
I am no wordy flatterer, signor,—  
Your cause, linked to the best men's hopes and wants,  
Wears the fresh look of healthy expectation,  
Your many friends make many friends, and these  
Breeding so fast, each day counts new recruits.

ROB. Berto, thou hear'st; thy bakers, gloviers, vintners,—

BERTO. Are not among the new recruits.

IGN. They are not.

We need them not: of less account are these  
Than in the old rude times, ere men were sifted  
By the great Medici. Thanks to their rule,  
The common herd, in losing half their power,  
Have lost some of their insolence, and are,  
Like hungry beasts, tamer to those that feed them.

BERTO. [*Aside.*] There he means every word that he says

IGN. Fear not for our success. The duke is hoarse  
With speaking for you, and the holy church  
Is on your side. Pope Borgia, our strong chief,  
Who ne'er forsook his friends—

BERTO. [*Aside.*] No: he never had any but priests.

IGN. Has sent a legate  
To personate his will in this election.

Events to be, show often with such bulk,  
They tax the sense like present certainties.  
Such, signor, is the lifting of yourself  
To the great station of command in Florence.  
There I behold you with so certain eyes,  
That thus I in advance pay you my homage.

[*Kisses ROBERTO'S hand.*]

ROB. Oh! reverend sir, you do me too much honor,  
I'm dumb with diffidence. When I am great,  
With acts I'll thank you then becomingly.

IGN. Signor, I'm honored by your confidence.  
'Tis a proud day when I can help to bind  
Such men together as the duke and you.  
He burns to be saluted as your son.  
To the Ladies Leonora and Cecilia  
I'll do my service at the duke's to-night.  
Signor, I take my leave.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

*Enter ERNESTO, by the way IGNAZIO went out.*

ERN. Was it not Ignazio whom I met going out?

BERTO. Ay: dost thou smell carrion?

ERN. What mean'st thou?

BERTO. The vulture has been feasting: the carcass is my  
poor master. Signor, the duke seeks to hasten the marriage,  
lest, by failure of the election, it be balked.

ERN. Didst thou hear what passed?

BERTO. I was present. The abbé told Roberto one thing  
and me another.

ERN. How was that ?

BERTO. He told lies ; the which my master took for truths, and I for what they were. To make brass seem gold and sour sweet, no alchymist like one of Rome's most trusted priests. Signor Ernesto, I have learned something ; something I thought I knew. I only knew it by halves.

ERN. What is that ?

BERTO. The unmeasurable, the unfathomable, the unimaginable virtue——

ERN. Of what in Heaven's name ?

BERTO. Of impudence. All the lessons in the big book of our neighbor Machiavelli are covered by that one word.

ERN. And your master's degree in this province of learning you have from Ignazio. Now for our plot. I must see Leonora. To Filippo I have divulged my knowledge of his secret ; he rejoices to have us for allies. Berto, go ask Leonora to give me a few moments. [*Exit BERTO.*] Frankness will do more with her than art : she herself is truthful. But she's giddy ; yet 't will be safest to make her a full confidence.

*Re-Enter BERTO.*

BERTO. Signor, the lady Leonora awaits you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

ALONZO'S *Studio.*

ALONZO : *to him enter FILIPPO.*

FIL. Is no place clean of black iniquity ?  
Are men beasts all, with godlike front ; within,

Rankness and dross ; without, festooned and sleek ?

Alonzo, let me look at thee. Art sure

Thou art not leopard visaged like a man.

ALON. Hast thou been fobbed — thy pockets picked so soon ?

FIL. This sculptured grace, this painted nobleness ;  
This beauty's bloom, climbing the ponderous stone ;  
This gleaming art, that makes the sun shine warmer, —  
Is all hypocrisy, all sensual play ?

ALON. Our air has turned him lunatic. What hast thou ?

FIL. I've heard a thing, the which, but that I'll stay  
To baffle it, would make me run from Florence.  
His single child Roberto sells for place.

ALON. Thou'st mad, or thou hast talked with madmen.

FIL.

Hear

Ernesto speak — my tongue but mimics his. —  
The Duke Fernando has engaged to stamp  
Roberto gonfalonier ; for the which minting  
Roberto pays with his daughter. One hour hence  
We shall be witnesses to the gross bargain.

ALON. Too gross for thought ; for act, impossible.  
Can thing so fair be subject to abuse ?  
Such beauty hath a quality transcendant,  
That should breed virtue in corruption's sty,  
And swell the good to fruitfull'st excellence.

FIL. And yet, but for my knightly oath — which here  
I swear — to rescue, if such power be in me,  
Cecilia from this hideous prisonment, —



Gay Leonora would draw half my worship.

ALON. The highest beauty lives not in the visage,  
But in the soul's palatial chambers, whence  
To the open portal in the face it comes,  
To look its blessing on humanity.

FIL. So yesterday I felt it at thy side  
In double measure from two windows large.  
My bliss had there been whole, had my eye seized  
The two in one. My senses were distraught;  
And I lost either, grasping at the two.

ALON. Like the wise quadruped thou hast heard speak of.

FIL. Giber, I'll tell thee what 'twas like: so listen.  
Couched in a boat far off on th' Adriatic,  
I've seen the sun his cloud-wove tresses lay  
Upon th' Euganian hills, their nightly pillow;  
Then from th' opposing shore the moon rise full;  
And both, poised on th' horizon's polished rim,  
Gaze grandly one upon the other, like  
Confronted deities, that grew in grandeur  
By sudden interfusing of their looks;  
Whilst I, not to divide my trancing wonder,  
But hold as one the two sublimities,  
That filled all heaven, longed for a Janus-head.

ALON. Bravo! And now thou'dst have a Janus-heart.

FIL. Away now to this duke's. 'Tis time. Thou'lt squire  
me  
In my knight-errantry.

ALON.

Unto the death.

[*Exeunt.*



## SCENE III.

*A Room in the House of DUKE FERNANDO, lighted up for Company.*

*The Duke; the Duchess, his mother.*

DUCH. Henceforth I sheath my woman's weapon, and  
No more with speech assail your staunch resolves.  
To bland civility I'll subjugate  
My carriage, so that pride show not its wounds  
In bleeding words or bruised looks. 'Tis late  
For me to learn so hard a lesson

DUKE. Mother,  
You let imagination smother you,  
Steeping your senses in the rotting past.  
Life draws its sap from the quick-panting present.  
Who would live healthily must breathe new air,  
Made daily by the sun and night-cooled earth.  
Yield to the past, the past will govern you;  
Embrace the present, and you rule the future.  
To look behind is to be weak: the strong  
Looks forward, hugging close the bounding now.  
The commonwealth needs ever stout new men.  
Such were the Medici.

DUCH. Baseborn and base.  
Myself I once refused a Medici,  
In wealth a Cræsus to your rich Roberto.

DUKE. Dear mother, grant me this. Let but your eyes,  
When they behold Cecilia, be true inlets,



Of ceremonial speech, his mirror practised  
 In bows official.— Comfort you with this,  
 For loss of the election : you have 'scaped,  
 My lord, a madman for your father-in-law.  
 The simultaneous weights of two such honors  
 Had surely cracked a skull so thin. Let not  
 Cold rumors cool him ; but to-morrow lock,  
 With hand and seal, the contract for your marriage.

*Enter several Gentlemen and Ladies.*

DUKE. Welcome, kind friends. Ladies, you do me honor.  
 Signor Ottavio, what's your quarrel with us ?  
 Your cheek is tanned by other suns than ours.

OTT. My lord, I have of late divorced myself  
 From Florence but to brace my love for her  
 Neath skies less motherly.

*Enter ROBERTO, CECILIA and LEONORA.*

DUKE. Ladies, my heart  
 Is in my tongue when I say welcome. Mother,  
 The ladies Cecilia and Leonora.  
 Signor Roberto, Florence has no son  
 For whom my doors so smoothly turn as you.  
 Her citizens, I trust, will prove they know  
 Whom they should prize. What of the election ?

ROB. Rumors  
 Fly thick and blind as hailstones in the night.  
 'Tis a rough time in Florence ; but our cause,  
 My lord, bears itself bravely.



Broke the long silence, "Angelo," "Raphael."  
Then he beheld the bearded head sublime;  
And as he gazed drew slightly back in awe;  
And great Da Vinci sweetly looked on him.

OTT. Aptly you speak, sir, for your quiet craft,  
And deftly lift your chiefs. As Florentine,  
I almost wish, with you I could upmount  
To your o'ertopping pinnacle of pride.  
But I have stood in Venice, when the Doge  
From the stored East came clogged with Turkish spoil,  
To beard the mighty King of western France;  
And I have heard the boastful cannon boom,  
As proud Genóa crowded to her quays  
To welcome home great Doria from the seas;  
I've seen the flaunting chivalry of Spain  
Group round their lofty Isabel; when she  
Gave thankful audience to that vast Italian—  
The foremost sailor of the sea-girt earth—  
Who gendered in his brain a Continent,  
And laid it at his wondering Mistress' feet.  
Here were the steadfast grandeurs of broad action,  
That make the heart throb prophecies of fame.  
For these o'ermastering doers, Florence has  
But writers, poets, painters, indoor workers,  
Soft cunning weavers of ideal webs.

ALON. The precious webs, whereof are wrought the cradles  
That rock the infancy of stoutest deeds.  
Th' ideal is, high wants of highest men,



Whose happy natures nurse the pith, that lifts  
From height to height climbing humanity.  
High poetry is higher history,  
A record written by an inward puissance.  
No story has the race that lacks th' ideal,  
Which has its incarnation in th' elect,  
Whose thoughts, grown larger than their times, leap out  
In acts and words that lash the sluggard times  
To their great motion, making history  
With daily doings. Acts and words are twins,  
Mutual reverberants, inseparable  
As sound from speech, or starlight from the night,  
And wed to Beauty, last in endless lineage;  
For beauty is the Cybele of the mind.  
Unwed to Beauty, lives nor act nor word  
In men's imaginative memory.  
Beauty's high priests, the dedicated poets—  
Whether with pen or pencil ministering—  
Are the fine nerves of Peoples. Weak in these,  
They are as barren as the drooping air  
Scanted in currents of electric life.  
Heroes are acted beauty, and true greatness  
Draws from th' ideal its choice nourishment.  
A winged unresting presence, Beauty sways  
Above our daily work, singing us heavenward.  
For fifteen hundred years a great Ideal,  
Quickening the heart, transmutes humanity.  
Fanning the nations with its lustral wings,

Such vaulting hopes it stirs, that men, upswung  
By its creative potency, believe  
Its holy author's life shall yet be lived ;  
And his words, more beautiful than ever else  
Were spoken — " Love thy neighbor as thyself, " —  
No more ideal, be men's daily act.

CEC. For your high teaching, sir, I thank you.

ROB.

Cecilia,

You are too bold.

CEC. Are honest thanks, sir, boldness ?

[*The scenes part behind, displaying a banquet. The Duke gives his arm to CECILIA, ROBERTO to the Duchess, &c., and as the company move toward the tables the Curtain drops.*]



Wherefore should they — whose prime, like landscape seized  
By the fresh giant, Morning, is aglow  
With quivering light — wherefore should they be darkened,  
Their sudden sweetness soured? This is not right.

LEON. It is not right that thy dear heart be wounded,  
That weeps such healing tears for others' woes.  
Who could do violence to such as thou?  
Thy father surely not: he loves thee, Cecil.  
Ambitious is he, not unkind; and when  
Of thy averseness to the duke he learns,  
Warm love will melt ambition's icy plots.

CEC. I will believe thee! 'Tis my meddling fancy —  
Bribed by a coward heart — that coins these fears.

LEON. Forget the duke: let's talk of something else.  
Filippo — once betrothed to thee — is here;  
And he has seen thee, and thou him.

CEC. What meanst thou?

LEON. Alonzo's friend Valerio, that is he;  
Ah, he, methinks, it were not hard to love.

CEC. Prove this; I give thee all my share in him.

*Enter* BERTO.

BERTO. Ladies, the Signor comes; with him the duke.

CEC. Leave me not, sister; Berto, stay thou, too.  
My one poor heart, unpropped, will not have pulse  
To feed my willing tongue with all its needs.

*Enter* ROBERTO *and the Duke.*

DUKE. Lady Cecilia, the rich happiness,





Choking with sudden growth thy better parts.  
When was my rule untoward to thy good?  
My judgment now is what it ever was,  
The guardian of thy simpleness.

DUKE.

Signor,

Modesty is the casket that inlocks  
A maiden's virtues. This sweet coyness whets  
My love with warranty of excellence,  
Adding a quenchless lustre to your gift.  
Dear lady, you so perfectly have taught me  
Love's task, the pupil now feels strong to teach  
His teacher. I will trust thy heart to learn,  
And through this rosy shyness do espy  
Its aptitude.

CEC. You read me wrong, my lord.

As to the lesson which you prize so much,  
If I have taught it you, the teaching was  
Without my will or knowledge. Love's a lesson  
Which only then is well taught when 'tis self-taught.  
When comes my time to learn, I'll teach myself.

DUKE. Begin then now : thy time is come to-day.  
For by thy father's will thou'rt mine. This hand—

CEC. [*Who, as he would seize her hand, draws it back.*]

If so my father shall enjoin, this hand  
I'll give thee—but, first severed from my wrist;  
That so, no longer warmed by my heart's currents,  
No part of me, bloodless and dead, I care not  
Whether it be given to thee, or thrown to the dogs.

DUKE. Know you me, madam? I am Duke Fernando.

CEC. And I, sir, am myself. Within a circle,  
 Drawn round me by my womanhood, I stand;  
 And who, with forceful grasp would drag me thence,  
 He is an ingrate to his mother's breast,  
 Disfranchised of a sister's duty, and,  
 Whatever name he bear, false to true manhood,  
 To whose right sense naught is more precious—nay,  
 Not morning light or nurturing bread—than is  
 A maiden's purity. [*Exit CECILIA followed by LEONORA.*]

DUKE. Here in your presence, sir, am I insulted  
 With a spoilt girl's unchecked capriciousness.

ROB. My lord, my lord, to-morrow this will pass—

DUKE. To-morrow, to-morrow;—I'll no to-morrows.  
 Nay, sir, you are not master of your own. [*Exit.*]

ROB. My lord, my lord—[*follows the Duke out.*]

BERTO *alone.*

There's a woman for you. If Florence had a score such, it  
 were too good for me to snore in. I should migrate to Rome.  
 To think, that I live under the same roof with such a perfec-  
 tion. Why, she would sweeten a whole province; she would  
 convert a monastery to innocence. Her one fault was, that  
 she was all angel. But she isn't; so she's faultless. A wo-  
 man that has not in her a spice of the devil, is not worth that.  
 [*Snapping his fingers.*]

*Re-enter* ROBERTO.

ROB. Berto, Berto, this is a sad business.

BERTO. So sad, it almost makes me laugh.

ROB. But the duke will not be pacified. In the election he'll turn against me.

BERTO. No matter which way he turns, signor ; he'll be like the pig in his wallow ; nothing will turn with him but his own skin.

ROB. He has great influence, Berto ; he can carry with him hundreds of votes.

BERTO. Not five. That grinning abbé would make you believe, that a wave of the duke's hand will knock a man down quicker than my fist. If I could but make trial on his reverend skull.

*Enter ERNESTO.*

ROB. Ha ! my dear friend, how overjoyed I am  
To greet you. Give me counsel. Wilt thou think it—  
Cecilia, who did never yet rebel,  
Is of a sudden mutinous ; refusing  
To marry Duke Fernando, and in's face  
Throwing such words, so hot with angry scorn,  
That I stood mazed, as if I'd heard a lamb  
Howl like a wolf.

ERN. Cecilia—did she this?

ROB. She who was ever so serene, her heart,  
Methought, held no blood red enough for anger,  
Startled the duke, us all, with speech defiant.

ERN. The pure never revolt but 'gainst what's foul :  
The anger of the good is truth in arms.  
Thy meek child's wrath deplumes thy soaring thoughts.  
Open thy heart to let her wisdom in.

My friend, the guiltless young are heavenly teachers ;  
 And blest is he, whose years leave him so humble  
 And clean, he still can learn from their deep schooling.  
 Let us go in and talk this trouble through. [Exit.

BERTO *alone.*

From a man with his heart in the right place, good counsel comes as easily as butter from thick cream. These two are bent now on getting Cecilia married. She is too good to be married, men are such knaves ; but then, she is too good not to be married, for thereby her husband's son will be less of a knave than his father. Marriage is the way of this wicked man-peopled world. I wonder what sort of a Berto a married Berto would have been. I laugh to think how I should have plagued my wife ; but I laugh louder to think, what a plaguing I have missed. Well, let who will get married ; all comfort shall not be banished from the world, for I'll keep single. [Exit.

SCENE II.

ALONZO'S *Studio.*

ALONZO *alone, seated gazing at CECILIA'S portrait ; then starting up.*

Shame on my fevered heart ; 't is almost jealous.  
 A blessing to my life she still may be,  
 If I keep worthy. Out, base jealousy :  
 There's no glass here to catch thy demon glare.  
 Oh ! how the sordid meddling self will thrust  
 An opake pettiness betwixt our manhood



And its broad ends impersonal, keeping us  
 In dead eclipse toward beauty's cloudless sun.  
 But what is beauty, if not in the life?  
 Can I, who have made vows to beauty, keep them  
 By cunning practices of eye and hand?  
 The eye but guides, the hand but holds, the brush:  
 It is the soul that paints: and never can  
 The base in soul reach high in spotless Art.  
 To know great beauty, we must live it, be it.

*[Seats himself again before the portrait.]*

This face divine has baffled me, because  
 I've been too selfish, too unlike the soul  
 That makes its splendor.

*[Enter FILIPPO behind him, unperceived.]*

Now, I'll paint it, now

That my large self hath triumphed o'er the small.  
 I'll love her as another's with a love  
 More holy still. But this Fernando—were she  
 Filippo's, then the two I'd love as one.

*[FILIPPO advances and touches him on the shoulder  
 He starts up.]*

FIL. Ay, start up, like the guilty thing thou art.

ALON My dear Filippo;—

FIL. Call me friend and force me

Peer in thy heart from 'hind thy back, to learn—

What makes me, too, the happiest of men—

Thy secret noble love for sweet Cecilia.

But now, I was a rag of wretchedness.



To thee I'd come for counsel ; for Ernesto —  
 Whose single thought was, foiling of the duke —  
 Thinking Cecilia's heart and mine mere wax,  
 For his warm will to melt into one lump,  
 Had made me swear to be her suitor, me  
 Whose wax was melting by another fire.  
 Thou lov'st Cecilia — I love Leonora :  
 Fernando, I've just learned, has been dismissed.

ALON. Filippo, dear Filippo, can I dare  
 To grasp at so much blessedness, an orphan —  
 Less than an orphan — a lone foundling —

FIL.

Ha!

Signor Bordoni, was he not thy father ?

ALON. He called me son, and made me be as son.  
 I loved him like a father ; but he knew  
 No more than I myself who were my parents.  
 On a cold day, in Mantua's streets he found me,  
 A boy of twelve years old.

FIL.

How cam'st thou there ?

ALON. As briefly as I can I'll tell thee all  
 A child's green memory can bring so far.  
 One summer evening, playing at the door,  
 I was upsnatched, and, with my face quick muffled,  
 Thrown in a boat upon a woman's lap,  
 Who idly strove to hush my frantic cries.  
 Terror kept me awake, it seemed for hours.  
 At last, soft Sleep — vexed childhood's pillowing mother —  
 Hugged me to her kind breast and stilled my sobs.

I woke within a hut, lying on straw.  
Oh! the sick anguish of that frightful morning.  
I had been stolen by gypsies, vagrant singers.  
How life held out against the hourly siege  
Of the long battering grief, I can not tell.  
That time's hot agony still wrings my heart.  
From town to town we journeyed, sleeping out,  
Or in lone barns. Oh! how I longed to rush  
Into the gaping crowds and tell my story.  
But ever on me were the cruel eyes  
Of the dark husband. By degrees life's strength,  
Fast swelling, sloughed my pinching sorrow off.  
And then, the woman loved me; and at last  
I loved her too. She had a mother's heart,  
And laid me in it. Years rolled on. We wandered  
To distant lands. One day Teresa sickened;  
From day to day was worse; and as she sank,  
Closer and closer pressed me to her side:  
Poured aching tears upon my head; and as  
I knelt, and mixed my prayers with hers, grew calm,  
And died then on my breast. I'd lost my mother:  
The only one I ever knew. Three days  
Thereafter, in the night, I left the man,  
And fled toward Italy; and there, weeping  
In Mantua's streets, my second father found me.

FIL. Alonzo, Alonzo, wast thou not from home,  
On a far journey with thy father?

ALON.

Ay—

I think it was—I think it was:—

FIL.

And thou

Wast five years old?

ALON.

About, about: why ask'st thou?

FIL. Wast not in Venice thou wast stolen?

ALON.

Venice—

Venice—Filippo, hast thou any clue?

FIL. I have, I have: but keep thou calm.—Alonzo,  
The night I came to Florence, as I rode  
By Fiesole, half-dreaming on my horse,  
There seemed to float before my path a wreath  
Of faces, smiling and swaying with joy.  
And as I shook myself awake, they vanished—  
To come again; and so they came and vanished,  
Until I reached the gate. And now I read  
This happy vision. Oh! if through my coming  
Thou shalt embrace thy father, and he thee,  
Rather than not have come, I would forego  
Embracing Leonora. Now to Roberto's. [*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III

*A Room in ROBERTO'S House.*

*Enter ROBERTO and ERNESTO.*

ROB. Till now, I had not prized thy thoughtful friendship  
At its great value, dear Ernesto. Would,  
That of the balm thou'st poured on my fresh wounds,  
Some drops I could distil for thy long pain.

ERN. Oh! had I seen my boy cold in his shroud,  
Then could my thoughts have followed him to Heaven;  
And there my agony at last had rested.  
But now—Oh! monstrous state—my anguish lives  
Because he lives; and dire imaginations  
My sorrow feed with ghastly food, and keep it  
Bleeding as fresh as on the day I lost him.  
There's not a tyranny that brutish man  
Upon his brother wreaks, but I have wept  
As his sad portion. Now, a slave I see him,  
Spit on by Moslem master; now, a menial;  
And now, a task-worn serf in frozen Moscow;  
Now, buffeted by storms and despot skippers;  
Now, naked, wrecked upon a savage shore;  
Now, racked in cell of hellish inquisition.  
In vain I cry—he's dead, he rests in peace—  
My heart will not believe it; but for ever  
Out from the night of cold uncertainty  
His image glares, a living, weeping spectre.  
Pardon me, friend; grief can not but be selfish.  
'Tis twenty years to-day since mine first seized  
My wifeless heart, and left me less than childless.  
No more, no more: I'll drive my sorrow out  
With thoughts of others' joy. Here come your daughters.

ROB. Be you ambassador for this new treaty.

*Enter CECILIA and LEONORA.*

ERN. My dear Cecilia, I am here as spokesman  
For my young friend Filippo——

CEC. Pardon me,  
Signor Ernesto; art thou sure thy words  
Know how to speak Filippo's mind to th' full?

ERN. Thy doubt himself shall answer: here he is.

*Enter FILIPPO and ALONZO.*

Filippo, with my tongue I was about  
To throw you at Cecilia's feet.

FIL. Signor,  
I'm proud you think me worthy such a place.  
First let me say what I have come to say.  
Signor Ernesto, 'tis now twenty years  
Since you in Venice lost your child.

ERN. Ay — ay:—

ALON. Signor Ernesto!

ERN. Oh! on every day  
Of all those years, my boy has died to me.

FIL. I have a friend, worthy to be thy son,  
Who, twenty years ago, was stolen by gypsies  
In Venice, on a summer evening.

ERN. Ha!  
Where — where? — His name — his name.

FIL. So deep his name  
Is buried 'neath the doubling folds of years,  
His memory, unassisted, can not reach it.

ERN. Oh! heaven — what yearnings seize my heart.

ALON. The name —  
The name —

ERN. Signor Alonzo: — Ubaldo.



ALON. Father, father—I am thy Baldino.

ERN. O God! 'twas so I called him. Round his neck—

ALON. A chain; here 'tis. [*Snatches the chain from his neck*

ERN. My boy, my boy—my lost one:

Is't so? I do not sleep—thy mother's brow—

On thy left arm thou hadst a mother's mark—

ALON. 'Tis here—a heart. [*Unbaring his arm.*]

ERN. Oh! day of joy. Filippo,

To thee we owe this unmatched happiness.

FIL. You owe it to a virtue there is in me;

Namely, that I, unworthy in myself,

Have the good gift to value worth in others.

This drew me to Alonzo; and my life's

Most fruitful work has been my love for him.

Nay, but I take what not belongs to me;

For 'tis a love—which I by chance discovered—

Deeper than mine for him, that has unlocked

This mortal treasury of joy. This love 'twas

That made him, in despair, relate his story.

The puissant one who, all unconsciously,

Winning a heart as noble as her own,

Has loosed this long-pent flood of happiness—

Making one love reveal another—and thus,

Is the dear causer of a general bliss;

This ministering mistress of Love's purest fonts,

Is, the Lady Cecilia.

ALON. My bold secret

Which one hour since, I had locked within my breast,

As the sweet nourishment of solitude,  
My friend hath truly told, Lady Cecilia ;  
Speaking for me the venturous words, which I,  
Now new-baptized in joy, myself had spoken.

CEC. Signor Alonzo, one hour since, these words  
Had been as grateful to my ear as now ;  
And if this sudden sunshine makes them flow,  
Its rays are hardly to your father's heart  
More gladsome than to mine.

ERN. Peerless Cecilia !

CEC. Dear father, wilt thou give thy daughter to  
Thy old friend's son ?

ROB. Had I a hundred daughters,  
I'd give them all to dear Ernesto's sons.

CEC. Alonzo, thou hast not thy father's leave.

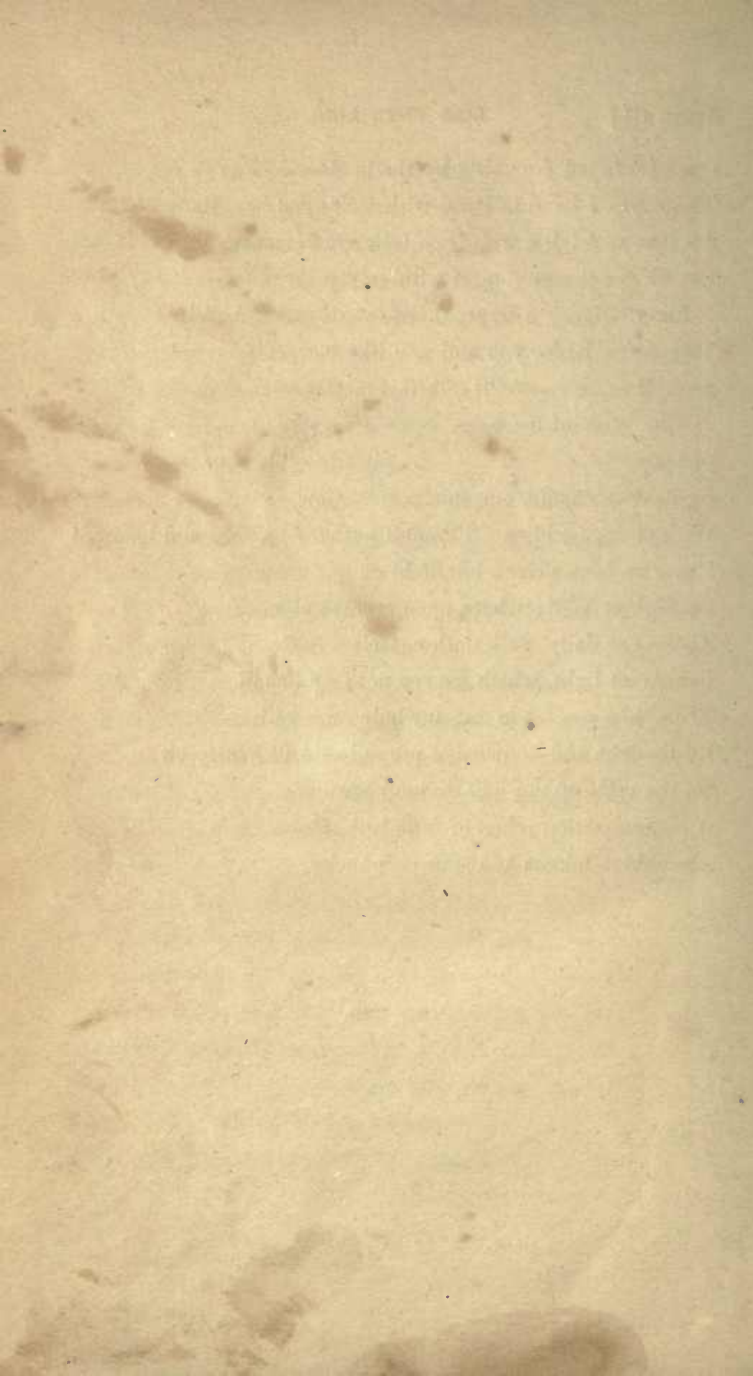
ALON. Oh ! blessed day, that brings me such a duty,  
Lapping me in a sweet dependence. Father——

ERN. If aught could make thee dearer to my soul,  
It were to have thee mated thus.

ALON. Filippo,  
My bliss is incomplete, unyoked to thine.  
Lady Leonora, thou canst complete it. Let  
My tongue woo for my friend, as his for me.  
He loves thee ; and of all the men I've known  
He is the easiest to love.

FIL. Have pity on me,  
Lady. From far-off Padua I have come,  
Battling my way 'gainst stout adversities.















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